Hafa Adai!

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Taiwan's JAG Technology donates remote care platform to GMHA. PAGE 3

$1

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THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS MONTH IVA MAURIN

Members of the community join Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality administrator Eli D. Cabrera, and Mariana Islands Nature Alliance executive director Roberta Guerrero yesterday during the proclamation of the month of April as Environmental Awareness Month and April 22nd as CNMI Earth Day.

Story on Page 14

5 to prosecute case vs Torres

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Corina L. Magofna (D-Saipan) declined her selection yesterday to be the House impeachment prosecutor. Instead, House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) filed a notice of appearance for Magofna and four other representatives to serve as one team to prosecute Gov. Ralph DLG Torres in his impeachment hearing in the Senate.

Attao

Babauta

Manglona

Magofna

Staffler

Magofna will be joined by vice speaker Blas Jonathan Attao (R-Saipan) and Reps. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan), Donald Manglona (Ind-Rota), and Leila Staffler (D-Saipan) in making the case for Torres' impeachment.

At a press conference in the House chamber, Magofna said she puts Senate president Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) on notice that the House stands ready to prosecute Torres and that they have been preparing as a unit to prosecute the impeachment case together.

"You requested one prosecutor, we have chosen one prosecutorial team consisting of five members," said the lawmaker, adding that the Senate has no right to ignore their decision and proceed

See 5 on Page 4

'IPI has not remitted SS deductions in '20-'21'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

- More than 1,000 employees allegedly affected
- Commission to soon file another law enforcement actions vs IPI for alleged tax violation

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has not remitted Social Security deductions involving more than a thousand of its employees in 2020 and 2021, according to Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Andrew Yeom yesterday.

Yeom told the CCC commissioners during the board's monthly meeting yesterday in Gualo Rai, that he will disclose the unremitted amount in the complaint that he will be filing soon. He said they

See IPI on Page 4

IPI moves to dismiss discrimination suit of former workers

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has filed a motion with the U.S. District Court for the NMI requesting the court to dismiss the discrimination suit filed by a group of its former workers.

Yesterday, IPI *pro hac vice* council Daniel Weiner filed the motion to dismiss pursuant to Federal Rules of Civil

See WORKERS on Page 4

US opens 2nd COVID boosters to 50 and up, plus others at risk

By LAURAN NEERGAARD and MATTHEW PERRONE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Americans 50 and older can get a second COVID-19 booster if it's been at least four months since their last vaccination, a chance at extra protection for the most vulnerable in case the coronavirus rebounds.

The Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday au-

See US on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 6:25pm, March 30, 2022

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Additional Dose Vaccinated:	60.1%
Days since last community transmission	2

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	38,173
Fully Vaccinated:	37,394
Moderna	
Initiated:	5,348
Fully Vaccinated:	5,211
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	1,151
Additional Dose:	22,407

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	47,181	39	47,220
Recovered	45,987	131	46,118
Active	719	39	758
Deaths	343	1	344

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	11,065	0*	11,065
Recovered	10,947	0*	10,947
Active	85	0*	85
Deaths	33	0*	33

*No new update/CHCC update on April 4, 2022

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

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BUSINESS
Bank of Hawai'i has been ranked No. 3 among America's Most Trusted Companies.
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ASIA
South Korea dismisses North Korea's claim to have launched a newly developed missile.
Page 13

WORLD
Russia's pledge to scale back some of its military operations in Ukraine has drawn skepticism.
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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

$10K bail for man who allegedly impersonated a police officer

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a $10,000 cash bail on a man who told police officers he was a police captain in order to evade arrest.

Nick Jones Jr., 26, is currently facing charges of disturbing the peace, assault, and impersonating an officer after he tried to evade arrest by claiming he is a former police captain for the Department of Public Safety's narcotics unit.

During his bail hearing last Monday, Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio allowed Jones to post 10% of his $10,000 cash bail. After the hearing, Kim-Tenorio ordered Jones to return to court on April 6 at 10 am for a preliminary hearing while his arraignment was set for April 11 at 9am.

Jones was represented by assistant public defender Karie Comstock last Monday while assistant attorney general Steve Kessel appeared for the government.

According to court documents, a disturbance outside the DPS police station in Susupe was called in last March 26 at around 10pm.

A responding officer met with Jones outside the station, who then told the officer that he was a police captain and was working undercover for the narcotics unit. Jones added that he had been watching two men with a hidden camera inside the air-conditioning vent of their car.

The responding officer noted that he observed a silver sedan and a gray Toyota C-HR parked nearby. The officer later confirmed that the silver sedan belonged to Jones and also discovered it was the vehicle involved in another disturbing the peace incident earlier that evening.

According to another responding officer, upon arriving at the scene, he saw two other men standing by the Toyota C-HR, whose trunk and doors were wide open. The officer said the contents of the vehicle were scattered on the ground and the rear seats had been detached from their factory position. One of the men told police that they had just left a friend's place in Dandan and were headed to another companion's residence in Chalan Kanoa. As they were approaching his friend's residence, the man said the silver sedan stopped in front of their car and blocked their way before Jones got out of the vehicle and approached them. The man told police that, out of fear, he reversed his vehicle, left the area, and headed north on Beach Road.

However, Jones allegedly followed and continued to tail them while turning this headlights on and off. The man said that's when they drove to the police station to seek help.

There, the man said that Jones pulled up behind their car, got out and asked, "Where are the three girls? Where did

See $10K on Page 4

Manta Ray Battalion's Unarmed Team tops JROTC's drill contest

The Unarmed Team of the Manta Ray Battalion of Saipan Southern High School has won first place overall in the Annual CNMI Drill competition, winning them the chance to represent the CNMI in the Golden Bear National Drill Meet in Torrance California.

The Annual CNMI Drill competition was actually held last March 18, 2022, but the Manta Ray Battalion did not learn of the team's win until an online Google Meet on March 23 when the results were announced.

The drills were conducted separately due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, with both Armed and Unarmed Teams of the Manta Ray Battalion doing their drills last March 18, 2022, both teams showcasing their Inspection, Color Guard, Regulation, and Exhibition routines to the evaluators. The scores were not announced on the day of the competition due to other schools not having been evaluated yet.

"Both teams had to face challenges as they were practicing during a pandemic, knowing that they're risking themselves. However, I commend everyone for putting their time and effort into making it to our practice days," said C/LTC Martha Gordon. "I, along with the other leaders in the team, are so proud of them for putting countless hours of their time, dedication, and motivation into this victory" ***(PR)***

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BID SUBMISSION DATE & TIME: May 02, 2022, 10:00 a.m.

BEACH ROAD REPAIR FROM MONSIGNOR GUERRERO ROAD INTERSECTION TO MICRO BEACH ROAD INTERSECTION

Project package will be available on **March 31, 2022**, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of one hundred dollars ($100.00) is required for the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the NMHC Central Office Reception Counter in Garapan.

The provisions of the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held via video teleconferencing on April 14, 2022, 10:00 a.m., local time (ChST) through Zoom Video Communications. Bidders will be provided the video teleconferencing link on the NMHC website at www.nmhcgov.net by clicking on the "Procurement" menu tab and on the CDBG DR website at https://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com/. Failure to attend the Mandatory Pre-bid conference will be considered a non-responsive bidder. Immediately after the Mandatory Pre-bid Conference, bidders are required to join the NMHC Personnel and its implementing partner to visit and examine the project site. Failure to attend the project site visit will be considered a non-responsive bidder. Inquiries regarding this solicitation must be addressed in writing to Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer at P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950; email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net or fax to (670)234-9021, no later than 10:00 a.m. April 14, 2022.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/9447 or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

Taiwan's JAG Technology donates remote care platform to GMHA

In a virtual and in-person ceremony, Taiwan's JAG Technology Inc. donated their JAG TeleCare remote health monitoring platform to the Guam Memorial Hospital Authority on March 30, 2022. The platform is intended to bolster Guam's remote care capability, helping chronic patient care and responding to possible public health challenges in the future.

JAG TeleCare has been used in New Jersey and significantly reduced the re-admissions of heart disease patients since 2017. With its partner in Japan, JAG Technology has also been using the telecare platform to monitor care home residents' health and reduce the workload of staff nurses for years. When Taiwan experienced the first ever COVID-19 case surge in May 2021, many mild cases occupied the acute care beds at the hospitals and medical staff were overwhelmed and exhausted. That's why Taiwan's government of New Taipei City was glad that JAG TeleCare could help create so-called "virtual ward" in homes of positive cases to avoid the rush of mild cases to hospitals.

When New Taipei City first used JAG TeleCare, Taiwan was actually waiting for the ordered COVID-19 vaccines being shipped from the manufacturers. The Taiwanese really appreciated the U.S. government's immediate vaccine donations to help Taiwan's urgent demand during that period. Alan Tso, board chairman of JAG Technology, said that he kept thinking "What can we do to return this favor?" He eventually found that Guam is the U.S. territory closest to Taiwan and JAG TeleCare could be helpful for Guam. Through great assistance from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Guam, JAG Technology is grateful that GMHA agreed to accept the donation of JAG TeleCare.

Paul Chen, director general of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, joined the ceremony to witness the donation. He emphasized that "Taiwan Can Help" has been the country's motto during the COVID-19 pandemic. "With today's donation we are putting words into action. Access to high quality medical information and services is essential, as good health is vitally important to every citizen of the world. Commitment to our fellow nations during the pandemic is an example in which Taiwan has shown it can help," he said.

Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero witnessed the donation as well. She emphasized that the equipment and software of telehealth is essential to making telehealth a part of advanced services for the people of Guam. She thanked Chen for "always thinking about us. " "It really means a lot to be an investment to the healthcare here on our island," she said.

"We are so appreciative of this remote health monitoring software donation from JAG Technology," said Lillian Perez-Posadas, GMHA

See TAIWAN'S on Page 4

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*NO PAYMENTS FOR 90 DAYS

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2018 HYUNDAI KONA — SALE PRICE $19,995 | • 24,415 MILES • STK: 21D129A • KBB: $19,455
2020 HYUNDAI ELANTRA SE — SALE PRICE $21,995 | • 17,200 MILES • STK:21D078A • KBB: $23,225
2017 HONDA CIVIC COUPE — SALE PRICE $28,995 | • 30,501 MILES • STK: 17P403 • KBB: $29,176
2017 TOYOTA YARIS HATCHBACK — SALE PRICE $14,995 | • 69,682 MILES • STK: 21M012A • KBB: $15,515
2020 HYUNDAI VENUE — SALE PRICE $19,995 | • 8,383 MILES • STK: 21D082A • KBB: $21,071
2018 MAZDA MAZDA6 SPORT — SALE PRICE $22,995 | • 13,544 MILES • STK:18HS1000 • KBB: $23,507
2019 MAZDA MAZDA6 GT — SALE PRICE $28,995 | • 27,000 MILES • STK: 22H021A • KBB: $29,936
2018 MITSUBISHI MIRAGE G4 — SALE PRICE $14,995 | • 5,800 MILES • STK: 18HS1011 • KBB: $14,778
2016 MAZDA MAZDA6 — SALE PRICE $19,995 | • 52,907 MILES • STK:16P380 • KBB: $20,065
2017 TOYOTA RAV4 LE — SALE PRICE $22,995 | • 34,800 MILES • STK:21D106A • KBB: $23,760
2013 TOYOTA FJ CRUISER 4WD — SALE PRICE $33,995 | • 85,000 MILES • STK: 13P359 • KBB: $35,786
2018 KIA FORTE LX — SALE PRICE $14,995 | • 16,939 MILES • STK:18HS920 • KBB: $18,632
2016 FORD EXPLORER XLT — SALE PRICE $19,995 | • 38,752 MILES • STK: 16R266 • KBB: $22,827
2018 TOYOTA CAMRY XLE — SALE PRICE $26,995 | • 33,682 MILES • STK:22M050A • KBB: $27,271
2018 TOYOTA TACOMA 2WD — SALE PRICE $33,995 | • 15,260 MILES • STK: 18P344 • KBB: $34,836
2015 TOYOTA CAMRY XLE — SALE PRICE $18,995 | • 47,100 MILES • STK:15P325 • KBB: $20,295
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Bank of Guam donates $7,500 for 'Red Cross Gala'

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Bank of Guam turned over a $7,500 check yesterday to the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter that will go toward the chapter's first "Red Cross Gala" on April 23 at the Kensington Hotel Saipan.

This donation makes the bank an "Academy Award" sponsor—the second highest tier of sponsors for the gala.

Marcie M. Tomokane, BOG's CNMI regional manager, said the bank supports the Red Cross-NMI Chapter every year. "We are in full support of the NMI Chapter over the years, financially and in kind when the chapter asks for assistance such as counting currency during their walk-a-thons, but overall, we fully support them when it comes to their mission because they're the first one that's out there when there's a disaster."

LEIGH GASES
Marcie M. Tomokane, fourth from left, Bank of Guam's CNMI regional manager, presents a check for $7,500 to American Red Cross-NMI Chapter executive director John Hirsh, fourth from right, during a turnover ceremony yesterday at the Bank of Guam. Others in the photo are Bobby Cruz, second from left, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter vice chair; Patty Palacios, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter board member, and Bank of Guam staff.

Tomokane assured that they will continue to support the Red Cross in one way or another.

John Hirsh, executive director for the Red Cross-NMI Chapter, is "incredibly grateful to Bank of Guam and their whole team here in Saipan as well as in Guam." BOG has supported the NMI Chapter for over 30 years, according to Hirsh.

Along with donating for fundraisers like the gala, the "BOG also helps us during big disasters as well. So we've had our destructive storms, like Super Typhoon Soudelor and Super Typhoon Yutu, the bank stepped up and provided a lot of financial assistance. Also, they've, throughout the years, had staff members serving on our board of directors," said Hirsh.

Others present during the handoff at the Bank of Guam were Bobby Cruz, Patty Palacios, and other Bank of Guam staff.

Gala donors thus far include McDonald's of Guam and Saipan, Docomo Pacific, TurnKey Solutions, E-Land Group, the Bank of Saipan, Atkins Kroll Saipan, GHD, and now the Bank of Guam.

A link to the fundraiser's information can be found at www.redcross.org/nmigala.

IPI

From Page 1

will be filing possibly two more enforcement actions against IPI relating to such tax violations, which, according to him, translate to major violations in the CNMI's casino regulations.

Yeom said that, at the end of their investigation last March 14, they have formally forwarded this case to the CNMI Division of Revenue and Taxation for official actions since the matter is a violation of tax law, whether it be local or federal.

He said their investigation started when the CCC received last Jan. 28 an anonymous email from the public that IPI has not remitted the employees and employers Social Security withholding for more than a year.

"We found this to be a very concerning matter if, in fact, this was true, which warranted our investigation," Yeom said.

Shortly thereafter, he said, they contacted IPI to ask about the validity of this claim. He said that IPI's Human Resource director, Redie Dela Cruz, informed them that the claim is true and mostly correct and that they have referred the matter to their legal team for their due diligence. He said they were asked to give IPI some time for their due diligence as well as to seek remedial solution.

Yeom said a little more than a month later, or last March 3, after discussions with IPI, they finally gathered information from IPI's finance director Frances Mafnas, showing the total aggregate amount owed Social Security, the number of affected employees, and the years affected.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

WORKERS

From Page 1

Procedure Rules 12(b)(6) and 12(f), claiming that the plaintiffs fail to state a plausible claim to relief.

The plaintiffs—Özcan Genç, Hasan Gökçe, and Süleyman Köş—are former IPI employees hired to work on the construction of the Imperial Palace Casino and Hotel Resort in Garapan. They claimed that the casino investor engaged in a company-wide practice of employment discrimination, both intentional and systemic, on the basis of national origin, against them and others by paying them less than the Taiwanese employees.

However, Weiner claims that that plaintiffs' complaint lacks any factual allegations to support their claim.

"Alleging that IPI engaged in unlawful discrimination and that 'Taiwanese workers' 'had the same level of skills, qualifications, and experience as plaintiffs and members of the class' is not sufficient. Plaintiffs must present nonconclusory factual allegations that permit the court to reasonably infer the alleged discrimination," he said.

Because of their lack of factual allegations, Weiner said the court should dismiss the complaint in its entirety. "Plaintiffs' complaint includes no factual allegations that can support an inference of a pattern or practice of IPI's alleged discrimination against plaintiffs or the purported class members because of their Turkish national origin. Rather, plaintiffs' only allegations concerning the alleged discrimination are conclusory assertions insufficient to survive a motion to dismiss," he said.

According to court documents, the plaintiffs claim they were paid significantly lower than other workers who were in the same class and shared the same skills and experiences as they did because of their race.

As a result of IPI's alleged discriminatory conduct, the plaintiffs and other members of the class reportedly suffered damages, including but not limited to, reduced wages.

According to the lawsuit, Genç started working for IPI in January 2020 as a foreman and the leader of the welding and drywall team. Genç's title on IPI's certificate of employment was construction carpenter, and his salary was $21,840.00 a year.

Gökçe started working for IPI in January 2020 as a plumber, master of pipe installation, and plumbing foreman. Gökçe's title on IPI's certificate of employment was plumber, and his salary was stated as $21,840.00 a year.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

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From Page 1

without them.

Magofna clarified that she is not backing down as she would take whatever challenges are being thrown at her. "I would like to do this as a team effort and not just myself," she said.

Villagomez filed yesterday a notice of entry of the collective appearance to the Senate for Magofna, Attao, Babauta, Manglona, and Staffler as members of the House prosecution team.

In his notice Tuesday, Hofschneider told Magofna that if she fails to file and enter an appearance as the House impeachment prosecutor by yesterday, Wednesday, at 4pm, the Senate will move forward with the impeachment deadlines and hearing, with or without a House impeachment prosecutor.

At the press conference yesterday, Villagomez reiterated the reasons why he and Attao declined the Senate's request to serve as House impeachment prosecutor.

Senate Committee on Impeachment Hearing chair Sen. Karl R. King-Nabors (R-Tinian) earlier requested Villagomez to serve as House impeachment prosecutor, but Villagomez declined.

King-Nabors then sent Attao a notice to file an appearance as the House impeachment prosecutor, considering that Attao served as chairman of the House Special Impeachment Committee. Attao also declined.

At yesterday's press conference, Magofna said Villagomez and Attao both indicated that the House was preparing as a cohesive team, not as individuals, to prosecute the matter.

Magofna said the House has not selected any members to serve a sole House impeachment prosecutor and assuming that one member must be selected, this decision should be made by the House leadership, not Hofschneider.

The lawmaker said Villagomez declined and Attao was unable to either accept or reject the order to enter an appearance based on the unconstitutional rules and violations of the Open Government Act as well as the fact that the Senate Impeachment Rules are the product of attorneys that were employed by Hofschneider or Torres himself.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

US

From Page 1

thorized an extra dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine for that age group and for certain younger people with severely weakened immune systems.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention later recommended the extra shot as an option but stopped short of urging that those eligible rush out and get it right away. That decision expands the additional booster to millions more Americans.

Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC's director, said it was especially important for older Americans—those 65 and older—and the 50-somethings with chronic illnesses such as heart disease or diabetes to consider another shot.

"They are the most likely to benefit from receiving an additional booster dose at this time," Walensky said.

There's evidence protection can wane particularly in higher-risk groups, and for them another booster "will help save lives," FDA vaccine chief Dr. Peter Marks said.

For all the attention on who should get a fourth dose of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, only about half of Americans eligible for a third shot have gotten one—and the government urged them to get up to date. Two shots plus a booster still offer strong protection against severe illness and death, even during the winter surge of the super-contagious omicron variant.

The move toward additional boosters comes at a time of great uncertainty, with limited evidence to tell how much benefit an extra dose right now could offer. COVID-19 cases have dropped to low levels in the U.S., but all vaccines are less powerful against newer mutants than earlier versions of the virus—and health officials are warily watching an omicron sibling that's causing worrisome jumps in infections in other countries.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

$10K

From Page 2

you drop them off?" The two men told Jones that it was just them and they had just come from a friend's house in Dandan.

Jones told the two men that he was a police officer and he instructed them to get out of the vehicle and present their driver's license. The two men complied and sat on the curb.

Jones then allegedly searched the trunk of the Toyota C-HR before making his way to the front seat, throwing the contents of the vehicle out on the street.

The two men told police that they were afraid of Jones and complied with everything Jones instructed them to do because they believed he was a police officer.

Police arrested Jones, who was then escorted to the Department of Corrections where he was booked and detained.

TAIWAN'S

From Page 3

administrator and CEO. "We intend to work with the larger Guam healthcare community to best utilize this technology and its monitoring capability, in order to better track and monitor the health of our people. COVID has shown us that now, more than ever, we need to prioritize community access to healthcare and population health management!"

GMHA prepared a certificate of appreciation for JAG Technology. Felix Yen, the director of the Guam Taiwan Office, visited JAG Technology's office in New Taipei City and presented the certificate to Tso on behalf of GMHA. ***(PR)***

Woman's supervised release is revoked

The U.S. District Court for the NMI has revoked the supervised release of a woman who was convicted of using drugs after she admitted to using again during her release.

Last Friday, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona revoked the conditional release of Vicklyn Manglona Teregeyo after she admitted to using methamphetamine, or "ice," again.

During the revocation hearing, Manglona also sentenced Teregeyo to three months in prison. After serving her sentence, Teregeyo will be placed on a three-month home confinement/detention with an electronic location monitor as special condition, followed by 27 months of supervised release.

Her supervised release was initially set to expire on May 23, 2022.

Immediately after the hearing Teregeyo was remanded to the U.S. Marshals Service's custody to begin serving her sentence.

According to court documents, Probation Officer Gregory F. Arriola told the court on March 11 that Teregeyo had tested a presumptive positive for methamphetamine, amphetamine, and THC (the psychoactive component of marijuana) as verified through a drug test sweat patch applied on Feb. 17, 2022.

In addition, Arriola said Teregeyo tampered with the drug test sweat patch that was applied on her on Feb. 11, 2022.

Teregeyo was convicted in Guam for the offense of drug user in possession of a firearm and ammunition, but was allowed by the federal court system to serve her probation in the CNMI.

On May 24, 2019, Guam District Court Chief Judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood sentenced Teregeyo to time served—12 months and 18 days—with a three-year term of supervised release. ***(Kimberly B. Esmores)***

Bill seeks to appropriate $254,500 for TCGCC's personnel, operations

Rep. Patrick San Nicolas (R-Tinian) introduced Tuesday a local bill to make limited appropriations in the amount of $254,500 for the personnel and operations of the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission for fiscal year 2022.

Under House Local Bill 22-30, $185,706 is appropriated for the personnel and operations of the TCGCC-Commission Division and the Division of Enforcement-Administration beginning July 1, 2022, and ending on Oct. 1, 2022.

The amount of $68,794 is appropriated and carried forward to fund the personnel and operation of TCGCC Commission Division and Division of Enforcement-Administration in fiscal year 2023.

San Nicolas stated that the Tinian and Aguiguan Legislative Delegation is aware of the delegation's obligation to enact a Tinian Local Budget for fiscal year 2022 on or before Oct. 1, 2021. However, the TALD did not receive any notice of estimated gaming revenue projection for fiscal year 2022 until March 1, 2022, San Nicolas said.

He said the Office of the Tinian Municipal Treasurer transmitted a communication dated March 1, 2022, to the TALD identifying local revenue for fiscal year 2022 in the amount of $254,500 that is available for appropriation following a payment of a casino license fee.

The lawmaker said pursuant to the law, casino licensees are required to renew their licenses upon expiration.

He said TALD finds that the identified local revenue for fiscal year 2022 is not enough to satisfy in full all the personnel and operational expenses of the TCGCC, Office of the Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan, and the Tinian Municipal Treasurer up to the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30, 2022. Accordingly, San Nicolas said, the TALD finds that it is necessary to appropriate the identified local revenue for expenses of the Commission Division and the Division of Enforcement - Administration of the TCGCC from July 1, 2022, to Sept. 30, 2022.

Any remaining funds available after Sept. 30, 2022, shall be carried forward to fund the operations of the two divisions in fiscal year 2023. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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www.saipanchamber.com

Closes March 31, 2022

IPI shores up board with new appointments

Imperial Pacific International (IPI) announced that it has appointed Chen Feng, a 48-year old Chinese accountant, as joint chairman and executive director, and added another non-executive director.

Chen's experience has been in Mainland China, working in a series of finance-related roles in industrial firms such as Fuzhou Zhongwei Industrial Co. and Xiamen Lurun Financial Management Consulting Co.

Chi Yuan, also 48, will join as an independent non-executive director. He has been in financial management roles in China in food manufacturing, textile, shoe manufacturing and catering, among others, since 2007.

IPI said the appointments are for two years. Chen will be paid HK$50,000 a month and Chi will be paid $10,000. Both appointments took effect from March 25th.

IPI, which has the monopoly license for a casino on Saipan, has seen a revolving door of senior management in recent years, with its CEO announcing his departure in February after just one year on the job.

Authorities on the island are set to decide in May whether the company will have its license, which is currently suspended revoked. The company recently won a two-month reprieve on that decision. ***(Asia Gaming Brief)***

Teodoro is honored for patriotic support of the Guard and Reserve

BARRIGADA, Guam—Giovanni Teodoro, project manager of Chugach Consolidated Solutions Construction Guam, received the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Patriot Award for the extraordinary support he has demonstrated to his employees serving in the National Guard and Reserve.

The award was presented to Teodoro by the Guam-CNMI ESGR State Committee during a "Lunch with the Boss" employer event hosted by ESGR on Feb. 23, 2022, at Dusit Thani Guam. Teodoro was nominated by Sgt. Abrianna Villanueva, who is serving the U.S. Army Reserve.

ESGR is a Department of Defense program that develops and promotes supportive work environments for service members in the National Guard and Reserve through outreach, recognition, and educational opportunities that increase awareness of applicable laws. ESGR also provides assistance in resolving conflicts between service members and their employers. ***(PR)***

Public warned of rough seas

A high risk of rip currents is in effect through Friday afternoon.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, dangerous rip currents are present along east facing reefs of the Marianas. The high rip current risk is in effect through Friday afternoon.

This condition will create dangerous swimming and surfing conditions and localized beach erosion. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water. Inexperienced swimmers should remain out of the water due to dangerous surf conditions.

Th public is reminded to stay out of the water along east facing reefs. Elsewhere, swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
ENERGY DIVISION
P.O. Box 500340, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. Nos. (670) 664-4480 / Fax No. (670) 664-4483 I E-mail: cnmienergy@gmail.com

PUBLIC HEARING:

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Office of the Governor in cooperation with the Department of Public Works/Energy Division Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) will be conducting a public hearing to present the proposed WAP State Plan for Program Year 2022 and is inviting the General Public to attend this important Public Hearing.

The public hearing will be held at the Energy Division office located on Capitol Hill, House No. 1337 on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. Individuals who are unable to attend the public hearing in person may submit written comments to the Energy Division, Capitol Hill, House No. 1337, Saipan or by e-mail to cnmienergy@gmail.com or by mail to P.O. Box 500340, Saipan, MP 96950 on or before close of business on Wednesday, April 27, 2022.

Copies of the Draft State Plan will be made available at the Energy Division, Capitol Hill, House No. 1337 beginning Friday, April 01, 2022.

For more information, you may contact Thelma B. Inos, Energy Director, at 664-4480/81 or you may visit the Energy Division Office on Capitol Hill, Monday to Friday, except holidays, and from 07:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

HINEKKUNGUK PUPBLIKU

I Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Marianas siha gi Ufisinan Gubietnu yan i ko'operasion i Dipattamentun Che'chu' Pupbliku/Dibision Energy gi Prugråman Asistensian Weatherization (WAP) para u makundudukta hinekkunguk pupbliku ni para u maprisenta i manmaproponi na WAP State Plan para

i Prugråman i sakkan 2022 yan ha kumbibida i Pupbliku Heneråt para u ma'atendi esti na impottåntin Hinekkunguk Heneråt.

I hinekkunguk pupbliku para u makundukta gi Dibision Energy, giya Capitol Hill, Numirun Guma' #1337, gi Måttes, Abrit 13, 2022, gi oran alas 5:00 gi pupuengi. Todu indibiyuåt siha ni ti sumiña umatendi i hinekkunguk heneråt siña muna'halum tinigi' upiñon siha guatu gi Dibision Energy, Capitol Hill, Numirun Guma' 1337, Saipan pat i email guatu gi cnmienergy@gmail.com pat na'hånao i kattåm-mu guatu gi P.O. Box 500340, Saipan, MP 96950 gi pat åntis di u mahuchum i ufisina gi , Metkoles, Abrit 27, 2022.

Kopia siha gi Draft State Plan para u mana'guaha gi Dibision Energy, Capitol Hill, Numirun Guma' 1337 tinituhun gi Betnes, Abrit 01, 2022.

Para mås imfotmasion, siña un ågang si Thelma B. Inos, Direktot Energy, gi 664-4480/81 pat siña un bisita i Ufisinan Dibision Energy giya Capitol Hill, Lunis asta Betnis, fuera di holidays, yan gi oran alas 07:30 gi egga'an asta alas 04:30 gi dispues di talu'åni.

ARONGORONGOL TOULAP:

Bwulasiyol Sów Lemelem lóll Commonwealth wól Téél Fáluw kka Faluwasch Efáng Marianas fengál me aliilisil Bwulasiyool Public Works/Energy Division Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) e bwe ayoora eew arongorong reer toulap bwelle e bwe apasa rel pommol WAP State Plan rel Program Year 2022.

Arongorong yeel e bwe fis me rel Energy Division me Capitol Hill, House #1337, wóól Mwaatis, Seeta 12, 2022, óttol 5:00 p.m.

Schóókka rese tawe re bwe fiti arong yeel, e mmwel schagh u bwe iischilong mááfiyómw rel Energy Division, Capitol Hill, House # 1337, Seipél: ngáre e-mail ngáli: cnmienergy@gmail.com me ngáre afanga ngáli P.O.Box 500340, Seipél, MP 96950 wóól me ngáre mmwal igha ebwe tittiló ótool angaang wól Merkulis, Seeta 27, 2022.

Kkopiyal Draft Plan yeel nge emmwal rebwe bweibwogh me Energy Division, Capitol Hill, House #1337, wóól Bennis, Seeta 01, 2022.
Rel kkapasal, e mmwel ów bwe fafingi ló llemwáár ye Thelma B. Inos, Energy Director, rel 664-4480/81 me ngáre igha u bwe mwette ló rel Bwulasiyol Energy Division ye e llo Capitol hill, Luunis mwette ngáli Bennis, saabw holidays, me ótool 07:30 a.m. ngáli 04:30 p.m.

/s/ James A. Ada
Secretary of Public Works

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
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Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Richard V.Salas
Director, DCRM

AMENDMENT
NOTICE OF CRM PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios through the Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) hereby give notice that a CRM Agency Officials meeting will be held on ***Tuesday, April 05, 2022 at 9:30AM*** at the BECQ 2nd Floor Conference Room, in Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan.

To minimize the threat of COVID-19 and to ensure the health and safety of all, virtual public participation will continue and encouraged via video conferencing through Zoom link: hhtps://zoom.us/j (Meeting ID: 6706648315) or join via telephone by calling the DCRM office at (670) 664-8300 for connection assistance and most updated information as Zoom meeting access code may change.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
   A. Call to Order
   B. Roll Call
   C. Adoption of Agenda
   D. Adoption of January 27, 2022 Meeting Minutes

II. PERMIT APPLICATION REVIEW
   1) CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2022-015 Project: RESOURCES MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION (RMIC) RESUMPTION OF ROCK QUARRY PROJECT
   Applicant: JOAQUIN M. MANGLONA
   RMIC is proposing to resume the rock crushing and rock quarry operations. The project includes extracting raw corals and limestone materials. The project site is located on public land identified as Lot No. 069 A 01, measuring approximately 20,000 square meters.
      a. Agencies' Discussion
      b. Agencies' Final Determination

III. OTHER MATTERS
   1) Proposed revisions to NMIAC Chapter 15-10 affecting permit application and amendment procedures
   2) Authorization for DCRM Director to promulgate proposed regulations

IV. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and submit written or oral testimony regarding the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).

/s/ RICHARD V. SALAS
Director, DCRM

Faces of MCIPAC: The CHamorro Marine legacy

U.S. MARINE CORPS/GUNNERY SGT. RUBIN J. TAN

U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Donald Pangelinan, training non-commissioned officer for Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, poses for a photo with his wife, Tatiana, and their son while in Guam on March 26, 2022. Pangelinan's hometown is Tanapag, Saipan, and he is a graduate of Marianas High School.

By RUBIN TAN
MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP BLAZ

The Marine Corps shares a rich history with the people of Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands dating back to the landing of the first U.S. forces in Guam in June 1898, during the Spanish American War. Marine Barracks Guam was officially established in August 1898 and permanent structures completed in the village of Sumay in 1901. The Marines maintained a continuous presence in Guam until December 1941, when the island was captured by Imperial Japanese forces at the beginning of World War II. On July 21, 1944, Marines and soldiers of III Amphibious Corps landed in Guam, retaking the island on Aug. 10 and concluding the Marianas campaign. Marine Barracks Guam was reactivated on June 1, 1946, and deactivated on Nov. 10, 1992. On Oct. 1, 2020, Marine Barracks Guam was reactivated as Marine Corps Base, Camp Blaz continuing the long association between the U.S. Marines, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands.

CPL Donald Pangelinan is an infantry rifleman and a native CHamorro from Tanapag, a small village on Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. Tanapag played a major part in Marine Corps history when on June 15, 1944, Tanapag Beach was the landing site for Marines from the 2nd and 4th Marine Divisions, accompanied by soldiers of the U.S. Army's 27th Division, during the amphibious assault on the heavily fortified island defended by Imperial Japanese forces. The Battle of Saipan concluded with U.S. forces capturing the island on July 9, 1944, with both sides sustaining heavy casualties.

Pangelinan currently serves as the training non-commissioned officer for Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz. His responsibilities are to ensure unit-level training events are properly planned, coordinated, and executed; that Marines are afforded the opportunity to attend professional military education; and they receive specialized training for their career advancement.

The base, currently under construction, is named after the late Brig. Gen. Vicente "Ben" Thomas Garrido Blaz, a Guam native and the first CHamorro Marine to attain the rank of general officer. He later became Guam's elected delegate to Congress. MCB Camp Blaz is the first newly constructed Marine Corps base since 1952.

"In the past couple of years, you always hear about people who are able to put the place they are from on the map and it really is an example for us—especially for us," said Pangelinan. "Not a lot of people know about the history [of] Guam, Saipan, and other islands in the Marianas, so it's really cool to know the base itself is named after a CHamorro."

In 2018, Pangelinan graduated from Marianas High School on Saipan and knew he wanted to be a Marine. His inspiration came from his father, Dustin Pangelinan Sr., and his uncles, many of whom served in the U.S. Marine Corps. Like himself, his father served as an infantry rifleman and was stationed at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California. Dustin Pangelinan Sr. served with the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment as part of 1st Marine Division and deployed twice to Iraq before being medically retired due to injuries sustained in Iraq in 2004.

In 2019 Donald Pangelinan received his first duty assignment after completing the initial training for all entry-level infantry Marines. His first duty station—2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division—the same regiment his father previously served in. A year later in 2020, Donald Pangelinan deployed with his unit to Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

"Although I arrived to the unit during a different time period, a lot of the base principles and key points my dad wanted me to learn and to anticipate was all the same," said Donald Pangelinan. "Just being a part of the same things he went though at that point of his life, making the same run up 1st Sergeant's Hill, the same helo pad, it was always in the back of my mind that helped me get through it— Oh, if my dad did this, I can too."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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Location of Employment: Saipan
Applicants for this position must have a Bachelor's Degree in Accountancy with 60 months work experience as an Accountant. Interested applicants should send their application and resume to the employer (by mail: P.O. Box 505979 CK Saipan, MP 96950; by email: Where_Is_Amelia@hotmail.com).

CHARLENE M. LIZAMA, Chairman · JAMES M. MENDIOLA, Vice Chairman · ANTONIO S.N. BORJA, Member · DONALD M. HOFSCHNEIDER, Acting Executive Director

TINIAN CASINO GAMING CONTROL COMMISSION

Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission (TCGCC) hereby gives notice that it will hold its Regular Meeting on Tuesday, April 5, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. at the TCGCC Conference Room.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY
- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Adoption of Agenda
- d. Adoption of Minutes
  1. March 1, 2022 – Regular Meeting

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS[1]
III. REPORTS
- a. Chair's Report
- b. Executive Director's Report

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- a. Casino Service Industry
  1. United States Playing Card Company
- b. Casino License
  1. Bridge Investment Group/ Tinian Diamond Casino

V. NEW BUSINESS
VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION[2]
VII. OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS
VIII. MISCELLANEOUS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
IX. ADJOURNMENT

[1]Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
[2] Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Commission may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Juan Taitano] FCD-DI CIVIL
] ACTION NO.
] 22-0070
-vs-]
]
]
Li Taitano]
Respondent,]
_____]

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT: LI TAITANO

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the Court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 501698 Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this Summons, Judgement by Default may be taken against you for relief in the Complaint.

Dated this 18th day of February, 2022.

/s/Clerk of Court

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PUBLIC NOTICE

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AMENDED
NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2022

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an estimated $1,514,000.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of $970,416.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); $463,940.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and, $79,644.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2022.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention **and rapid re-housing** activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Applications for the use of CPD funds are available for pick up at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located in Garapan, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota, beginning February 03, 2022

You may also obtain the application online at www.nmhcgov.net in the section titled "Public Notice/Announcement" subsection "Community Planning Development"

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Residents); San Jose, Tinian (Tinian Residents); and, Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Residents) by ***May 04, 2022, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after May 04, 2022, will not be accepted.***

A briefing will be conducted for interested applicants and for those applicants who have picked up an application for the use of CPD funds. The briefing will address the program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of CPD funds.

The schedules for briefing are as follows:

March 14, 2022, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Saipan
~~***March 15, 2022, March 6:00 p.m. for the island of Tinian***~~
March 17, 2022, March 6:00 p.m. for the island of Tinian
~~***March 16, 2022, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Rota***~~
March 21, 2022, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Rota

We are encouraging all non-profit, for profit, and government service providers who are providing services to people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and emergency shelter administrators and operators to attend this briefing.

For residents living on the island of Saipan, the briefing will held at the NMHC Office in Garapan; Residents living on the island of Tinian, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and Residents living on the island of Rota, the briefing will be held at the Rota Mayor's Office Conference Room in Tatachog.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the briefing are available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Ms. Tricia Tenorio, Planner at 234-6866 or 234-9447.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Lift airport and airplane mask mandate now

In most places in the United States, we have almost fully returned to a pre-COVID-19 state of normalcy where people aren't required to wear masks.

But in a place millions of Americans must use, the federal government still holds sway, and it isn't letting go.

It is past time to remove the masking requirement in airports and on airlines.

Americans who were told to "follow the science" are fairly asking now why the Biden administration is hanging on to an unscientific requirement in a space that it controls.

In a letter dated March 23, the leaders of 11 major airlines, including American Airlines and Southwest, asked for the mask mandate in airports and on planes be lifted.

"Our industry has leaned into science at every turn. At the outset, we voluntarily implemented policies and procedures—mandating face coverings; requiring passenger health acknowledgements and contact tracing information; and enhancing cleaning protocols—to form a multi-layered approach to mitigate risk and prioritize the wellbeing of passengers and employees," the letter reads.

But now, the administration is turning its back on the science that shows the vast majority of the country, 99%, does not need to wear masks indoors.

For nearly two years, flight attendants and other front-line airline workers have faced enormous hostility from passengers as they have done their duty in enforcing mandates that no longer make sense.

The highly filtered, forced air on airplanes is cleaner than most indoor air, despite the close quarters. Meanwhile, the best quality masks are now widely available for passengers who still desire to wear a mask.

So why is the federal government still forcing everyone who has to enter an airport and get on a plane to wear a mask? It isn't about following the science; that much is clear.

The failure to dial back these restrictions on individual choice stoke resentment and will make it that much harder to convince people to mask up the next time we need to—and that time will come.

If the president and his advisers are serious about the facts, they will lift this mandate now, and let us edge that much closer to normal life.

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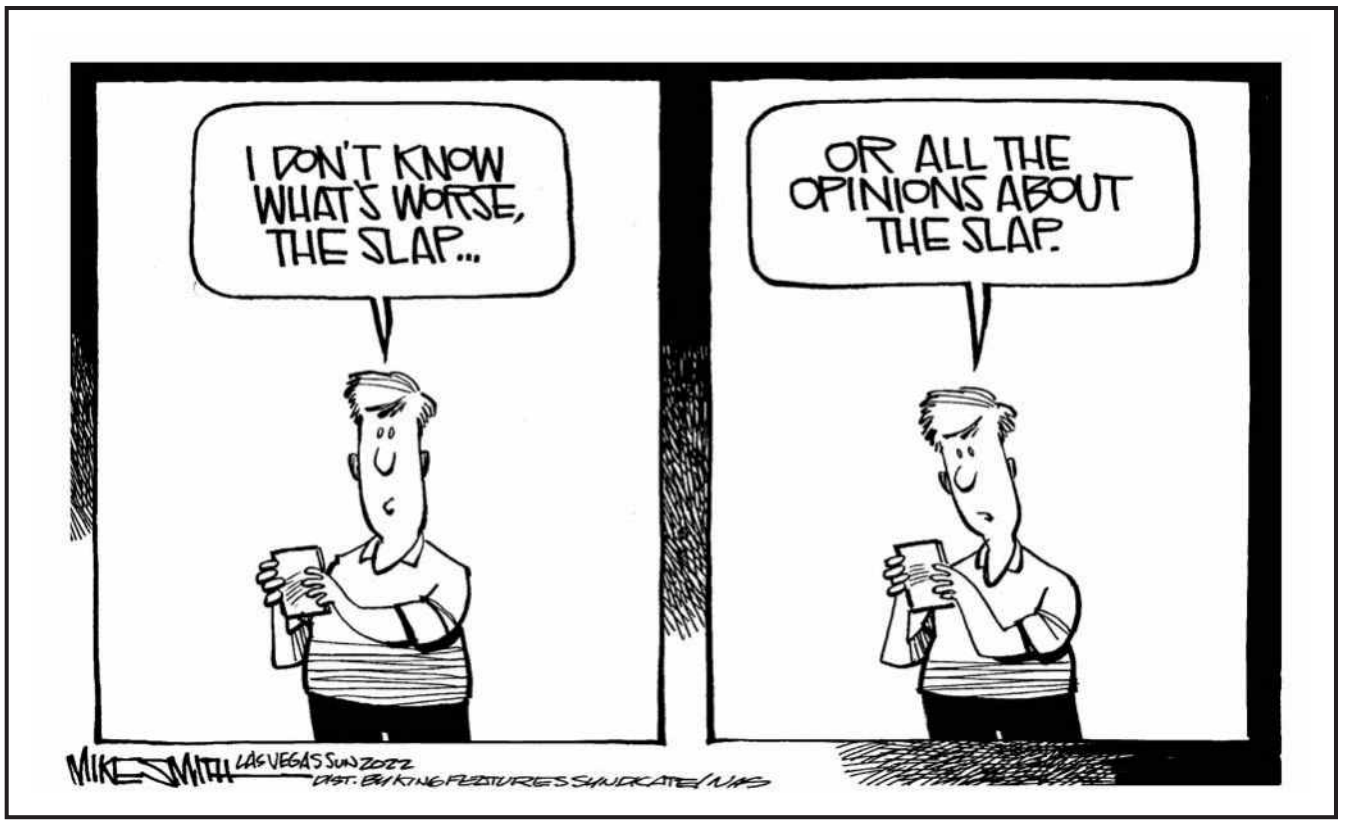
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WORSE, THE SLAP...
OR ALL THE OPINIONS ABOUT THE SLAP.
MIKE SMITH LAS VEGAS SUN 2022
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The elements of a peace deal in Ukraine are clear—but the 2 sides can't get there yet

By DOYLE MCMANUS
Los Angeles Times

Doyle McManus is a columnist for The Los Angeles Times. *Readers may send him email at doyle.mcmanus@latimes.com*

The war in Ukraine, which just entered its second month, shows no sign of ending soon.

Russia's huge but incompetent army has been stymied in its attempts to seize the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, and other cities. Ukraine's defenders have put up a heroic fight, but civilians in besieged towns are suffering a terrible toll. Neither army appears ready to quit. Each side thinks it still has a chance to outlast the other.

That, diplomats say, is why the chances for a cease-fire look so dim—even though, oddly enough, the ingredients of a deal to end the war are in plain sight.

In recent talks—some public, others private—officials from both countries have suggested possible compromises.

Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy has offered one public concession: He's willing to abandon his quest for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which Putin initially said was the reason for the war.

"We are told that we cannot enter (NATO)," Zelenskyy said recently. "It is true, and it must be acknowledged." He has suggested that Ukraine could accept formal "neutrality," but only if the United States and other countries guarantee its security against another invasion.

Putin may have tacitly lowered his ambitions, too. He initially demanded the "denazification" of Ukraine's government—his pejorative term for replacing the democratically elected Zelenskyy with a pro-Russian president. In recent weeks, Russian officials have stopped mentioning that demand.

A top Russian general made it sound as if Moscow has scaled back its military aims, too.

In an official briefing on Friday, Army Maj. Gen. Sergei Rudskoi, the equivalent of a deputy chief of staff, claimed that Russia never intended to seize Kyiv. Russian forces, he said, will now focus on gaining full control of Donetsk and Luhansk, the two regions in eastern Ukraine where pro-Russian rebels have declared independence.

But Putin has other, steeper demands. He has insisted that Zelenskyy accept Russia's annexation of Crimea, which Russian troops seized in 2014, and recognize the independence of Donetsk and Luhansk.

Zelenskyy and his aides have rejected those land grabs and have demanded that Russia withdraw from all of Ukraine. But they have offered what one former diplomat called a creative compromise: While they won't agree formally to Russia's annexation of any part of their country, they will promise to pursue reunification only by peaceful means.

The two sides have been talking sporadically, but they remain far apart on those key issues.

"There is no consensus," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said last week. "The negotiation process is very difficult."

The underlying problem, current and former U.S. officials said, is that Putin still appears to believe his forces can win.

"Putin doesn't sound as if he's decided to settle," Alexander R. Vershbow, a former U.S. ambassador to Russia, told me. "He hasn't given up hope that his forces will regroup. So now, instead of fighting everywhere in Ukraine, they appear to be focusing on one or two fronts, to see what more they can get"—a kind of salami-slice strategy.

Meanwhile, he added, Ukraine's forces are running low on the antiaircraft and antitank missiles they used to great effect in the war's opening weeks.

"The Ukrainians have been heroic, but they can't go on forever," he said. "They need a faster supply process. ... That, more than anything else, will contribute to a decision by Putin to negotiate."

Meanwhile, he said, it's not too early for U.S. diplomats to consider what the elements of a peace settlement should be—because some of them will involve pledges from our side.

"The hardest part will be security guarantees for Ukraine," he said.

The United States and its allies won't provide the sort of defense guarantee that NATO membership brings, he said, but they should consider formalizing their current security relationship with Ukraine: guarantees of military supplies, intelligence help and economic aid.

"It could include limits: no foreign bases in Ukraine, no offensive weapons that could threaten Russia. But the Ukrainians should have the right to a robust army that will receive assistance from other countries when they need it."

Aid to Ukraine, as well as sanctions on Moscow, may be needed for years—a daunting prospect for European countries that depend on Russia for gas and oil.

But a full-scale peace agreement will be difficult to negotiate, in part because of those insoluble territorial disputes, Vershbow warned.

"They might just revert to a state of no war, no peace. ... It could leave the two countries in a long-term, low-level conflict. That's the most depressing scenario, but maybe the most likely one."

Neither side will triumph. Both sides will be damaged, battered, angry and resentful. The hard part will be ensuring that whatever truce they negotiate can be made to stick—to ensure that this isn't just the first chapter in a much longer war.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Virtues and vices go on vacation

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

These two sonnets complete 13 Virtues listed by Benjamin Franklin in his autobiography, plus one. I added on Courage. I added a parallel opposite vice to each virtue. The series is going on hiatus for now, see you later with more virtues and vices. The first sonnet is dedicated to former POTUS John F. Kennedy, who wrote a book titled Profiles in Courage and it is also dedicated to Ukraine President Voldymyr Zelenskyy, who shows the meaning of courage to the world today.

Diamonds of Courage

Diamonds of Courage have many shining facets
they contain other virtues in many phases
they shun lies trying to be Honest as it gets
the truth may hurt but showing Courage amazes
as scales of justice weigh and balance information
Honesty with yourself summons Courage to fight
facets of Kindness and Patience help the situation
showing Empathy for those who are suffering is right
Humility helps when your lack of Courage is failing
and learn the joy of winning the sorrow of defeat
out in the turbulent seas of life we all are sailing
as strong currents of emotional Courage we meet
diamonds of Courage shine light in all directions
use it to find the Courage of your own convictions.

No Cowardice Allowed

"Old friends, they shine like diamonds, old friends you can always call..."—Guy Clark (1941-2016)

From those first shaky steps when they're learning to walk
toddlers show Courage
From taking their first steps when landing on the moon
astronauts show Courage
Marine scientists descending into the deep dark seas
of the Marianas Trench show Courage
Caring for loved ones suffering from Alzheimer's,
families show Courage
Spinal injury paralysis victims who won't walk again
show Courage every day
amputees, cancer survivors, school bus drivers
show Courage every day
Stephen Hawking immobile, speechless, in a wheelchair
had the Courage to study the universe !
standing up for what you believe in, God, family, country
shows your Courage
have the Courage to say, "I am Proud to be Me."

Go ahead, confirm Jackson as a justice

By JAY AMBROSE
Tribune News Service

Jay Ambrose is an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service. Readers may email him at speaktojay@aol.com.

Maybe I've been fooled, but my inclination is to say confirm her. Confirm Ketanji Brown Jackson as a Supreme Court justice because, during Senate hearings, she demonstrated a firm, decisive, constitutionally correct understanding of what her duties would be.

To put it simply, she is for the rule of law. To put it in more specific court terms, she thinks justices should determine what the Constitution actually says by referring to its specific words (known as "textualism") and, when necessary, their public meaning at the time they were written (known as "originalism").

Wow, is this really the nominee of an ideologically devoted Democratic president, someone cheered on by semi-socialist progressives informing us that our exceptional Constitution is a dusty, 234-year-old document left behind by current times? Precisely speaking, they have instructed us to adhere to imprecise interpretations reflecting up-to-date leftist dispositions improving modern-day America, a failed aspiration.

The vain desire is for a "living Constitution" that is actually stuck in a coffin when judicial oligarchs in effect rewrite it to fit their druthers and cheat democracy by avoiding a legal amendment process. After all, agreement by two thirds of both houses of Congress and three-fourths of state legislatures is the proper mode of revision, not a majority of nine appointed people restricted to contrary obligations.

By and large, most Republicans identifying as conservatives embrace the approach that Judge Jackson calls her "methodology." Democrats on and off the court tend to prefer the fraudulent way out, as in concocting a nonexistent constitutional right for mothers to kill their unborn children any time prior to viability in pregnancy. The progressives deceptively argue they are still heeding an implied constitutional principle, although this much I will concede: Legal questions can be loaded with complications, not least given the issue of precedents.

For instance, Judge Jackson reasonably said in the hearings that adherence to precedents is needed to afford constitutional stability and reliability although she also said new, defensible information and understandings can evolve. She believes Roe v. Wade is settled law and observed that two court nominees of ex-President Donald Trump said as much themselves. Do we now know more about the human life of these womb-bound creatures, maybe?

Judge Jackson has rightly worried Republican senators because, for instance, she has praised a New York Times project asserting that racism defines America more than anything. At the same time, she said her job as a justice would be dealing with law and facts, not with intellectual debate on such matters.

Some Republican senators have gone after her with virulent force on supposedly being a soft judge when sentencing child-porn collectors. She met the accusations with relevant details and counter-facts they chose to belittle or ignore. Despite her excellent performance, the alertness, intelligence and knowledge she showed in the hearings, she did make a grotesque error when she said she could not define a woman.

Is she considering that biologically male, transgender women should be afforded the specific legal rights of biological women, a betrayal of them and the original meaning of federal law about women's rights?

Progressive Democrats have blasted critical senators for inciting racial prejudice against this nominee who could be the first Black woman to ever sit on the court. Even if the allegation is bogus and two wrongs don't make a right anyway, consider that she experienced nothing even close to the abuse of a Donald Trump nominee called a teenage alcoholic sex offender when the only proof was that he had been a teenager, as deep thinkers say. Democrats, some believing separation of church and state means separation of religious people and state, went after a superb female nominee for being Catholic, in the view of this non-Catholic.

The truth is that both sides are fighting political battles when judicial viewpoints are what counts. This nominee may not live up to her words but is likely among the least risky Biden might have picked. She may make history in more ways than one.

Don't justify Will Smith's Oscar slap with the noxious notion that speech equals violence

By RYAN J. RUSAK
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Ryan J. Rusak is opinion editor of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

The slap seen 'round the world from Sunday night's Oscars ceremony holds an important lesson on free speech.

That was no doubt the farthest thing from Will Smith's mind when he charged the stage at the Academy Awards to pop Chris Rock after the comedian joked about Smith's wife, actor Jada Pinkett Smith, and her nearly bald head. But he vividly demonstrated why we must resist the idea that "speech is violence."

For those who want to vigorously police microaggressions, shut down ideas they disagree with and demand that tech companies and government help them do it, some words cause so much trauma that they equal violence. And to some extent, they have a point about how much certain comments can hurt, especially young people.

Jada Pinkett Smith has detailed her struggle with alopecia, a condition that causes extensive, if not complete, hair loss. If Rock knew that, he's a jerk for poking fun at such a sensitive issue during a worldwide broadcast.

But there must always be a bright line between actual physical assault and words, however hurtful. Otherwise, the state's duty to regulate violence will extend to language, and that's the end of free speech rights, possibly forever.

Some progressives—including, frightfully, a large share of younger Americans—say they're fine with that. Either they can't think beyond the current moment to a time when their views aren't culturally dominant or they can't imagine a politician they don't like (Donald Trump, anyone?) commanding such extensive powers.

Some immediately leaped to defend Will Smith's reaction as chivalrous (though they seemed to miss his initial laughs at Rock's joke, until Pinkett Smith stared him down). In a turn that all those movie-makers in the room couldn't have scripted, Will Smith got to speak as he accepted the Best Actor award. He hinted at the chivalry argument, saying: "Love will make you do crazy things."

For a moment, it was refreshing to see the masculine virtue of defending women demonstrated to the type of crowd that's glad to see manliness crushed.

But Smith's reaction cannot be condoned. And it absolutely must not be justified as an acceptable reaction to Rock's words.

Rock responded like a pro. He didn't strike back, though he must have wanted to. He stumbled through an introduction of the nominees for best documentary and just moved the show along.

We can't pretend that in his restrained reaction, Rock meant to illustrate the important divide between speech and actual violence. But we can be grateful for his example.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Confusion

I'm very sorry for the confusion. I was released Tuesday morning from the Department of Corrections. I just learned that I have to register while on Saipan, but not when I go to my home state of Florida. There I'm free. Thank you, for your understanding in this matter.

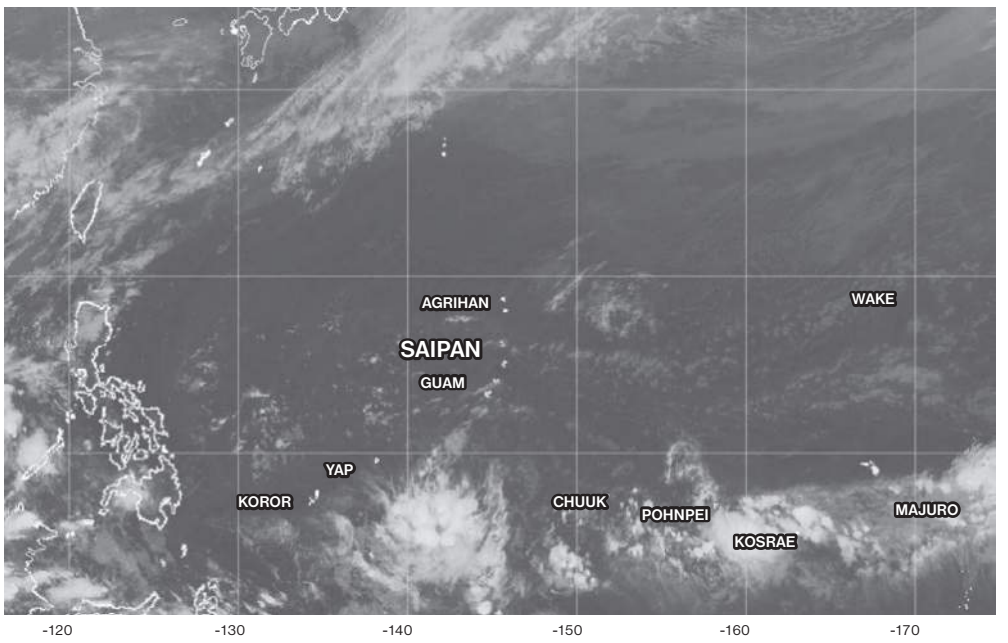
Stephen Albright
via email

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers	Partly cloudy with isolated showers
87º 77º	86º 76º	85º 76º	85º 78	85º 77º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:47 AM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows partly sunny skies with isolated showers this morning. The buoys reveal combined seas of 9 to 11 feet composed mainly of trade-wind swell and waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy/Wind	30 / 25 °F
Palau	Thunderstorms	28 / 25 °F
Yap	Scattered Thunderstorms	30 / 26 °F
Chuuk	Scattered Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Pohnpei	AM Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	30 / 27 °F
Majuro	Scattered Thunderstorms	26 / 27 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	06:13 AM	18:29 PM
Friday	06:12 AM	18:29 PM
Saturday	06:12 AM	18:29 PM
Sunday	06:11 AM	18:29 PM
Monday	06:10 AM	18:29 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Tuesday	05:31	17:40 PM	-
Friday	06:09	18:31PM	-
Saturday	06:47	19:22 PM	-
Sunday	07:24	20:12 PM	-
Monday	08:02	21:04 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	24 / 17 °F
Beijing	Sunny	16 / 0 °F
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	26 /19 °F
Honolulu	Sunny	28 / 21 °F
London	Partly Cloudy/Wind	8 / 1 °F
Los Angeles	AM Clouds/PM Sun	20 / 13 °F
Manila	Partly Cloudy	36 / 27 °F
Melbourne	AM Showers	21 / 12 °F
Miami	Partly Cloudy/Wind	28 / 24 °F
New York	PM Showers	21 / 12 °F
Osaka	Showers	17 / 18 °F
Paris	Light Rain	8 / 1 °F
Busan	Cloudy	14 / 8 °F
Rome	Light Rain	16 / 12 °F
Salem	AM Showers	24 / 9 °F
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	17 / 18 °F
Seoul	Cloudy	16 / 3 °F
Tokyo	PM Showers	21 / 5 °F
Washington, DC	Scattered Thunderstorms	24 / 11 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
01:06 AM	High Tide	0.04
07:32 AM	Low Tide	1.90
1:42 PM	High Tide	0.60
7:15 PM	Low Tide	1.86

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 28, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:40AM	7:20AM	1, 3, 5
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	2, 4, 6, 7

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:35AM	8:35AM	1, 3, 5, 6, 7
UA193	7:05PM	10:55PM	5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:40AM	9:10PM	1, 3, 5 via Guam
UA117/193	6:40AM	10:55PM	5 via Guam, Palau
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	2, 4, 6, 7 via Guam

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

S112	3:15PM	7:00PM	3, 6
TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	4, 7
7C3405	3:30PM	7:25PM	6
7C3405	3:50PM	7:45PM	3
OZ624	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	2:00PM	5:20PM	3, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA116	5:00AM	5:45AM	1, 3, 5
UA116	8:00AM	8:45AM	6, 7
UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	2, 4

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:35PM	4:35AM+1	2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA184	10:25PM	4:20AM+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:05AM+1	5 via Palau
UA184	11:50PM	5:40AM+1	5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/116	10:25PM	5:45AM+1	2, 4, 7 via Guam
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3 via Guam
UA184/116	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	6 via Guam
UA192/116	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/116	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

RS111	8:15AM	1:35PM	3, 6
7C3406	8:30AM	2:10PM	6
7C3406	8:50AM	2:30PM	3
TW9307	9:00AM	2:30PM	4, 7
OZ623	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	8:00AM	1:00PM	3, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

BOH is No. 3 on *Newsweek* list of 'most trusted companies'

File photo of the Bank of Hawai'i branch on Middle Road in Gualo Rai. KRIZEL TUAZON

HONOLULU, Hawaii—Bank of Hawai'i has been ranked No. 3 among America's Most Trusted Companies in the banking industry category, and is the only Hawaii business to appear on the list by *Newsweek*.

The publication's first annual "America's Most Trusted Companies 2022" list was published on March 24, in which 400 U.S. companies across 22 industries were ranked.

Newsweek partnered with Statista, a statistics database and consumer research firm, for its inaugural "America's Most Trusted Companies 2022" list. Publicly traded U.S. corporations with a revenue over $500 million in 2020 were considered. Based on customer research in 2021 from an independent survey of approximately 50,000 U.S. residents, residents rated companies they know on three touchpoints of trust: customer trust, investor trust, and employee trust. A total of 110,000 evaluations were submitted.

» BOH is the only business in Hawaii out of 400 nationwide to be recognized

Some of the questions asked were if respondents believed the individual company treated their customers fairly and addressed concerns to their full satisfaction; treated their employees fairly and offers good opportunities for career development; and believed in the company's values and trusted the company would be a good, long-term investment. Across all industries, the companies that inspired the most trust tended to be long established.

"Bank of Hawai'i is honored to have been selected by the very people who we serve and support. This recognition is especially meaningful, as our community continues to recover from one of the hardest times in recent history," said Bank of Hawai'i chairman, president, and CEO Peter Ho. "This speaks volumes about the commitment our Bank of Hawai'i teammates have for our customers, and for establishing longstanding, trusted relationships over our nearly 125 years in business." ***(PR)***

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Iowa to kill 1.5M more hens and turkeys because of bird flu

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—Iowa agriculture officials announced two more bird flu outbreaks in commercial flocks on Tuesday that will require the killing of more than 1.5 million hens and turkeys. One of the new outbreaks will lead to the killing of 1.5 million chickens at an egg-laying farm in Guthrie County, about 60 miles west of Des Moines. The other was at a turkey farm in Hamilton County, about 65 miles north of Des Moines, where 28,000 birds will be killed. After they are killed, birds typically are buried in compost pits on the farms. Iowa State Veterinarian Dr. Jeff Kaisand said it appears the infections are coming from migrating wild birds. The U.S. Department of Agriculture says 17 states have had outbreaks in commercial or private outdoor flocks this year. The virus has been found in wild birds in at least 25 states.

US officials can travel to China to aid crash investigation

WASHINGTON (AP)—A U.S. government agency said Tuesday that China has granted visas for federal investigators to travel there and aid in the investigation of the deadly China Eastern Airlines crash. The National Transportation Safety Board said China also granted visas to technical advisers from Boeing, which made the plane, engine manufacturer CFM and the Federal Aviation Administration. All would take part in the investigation, under long-standing international agreements. The safety board said the U.S. officials and industry representatives hope to leave for China this week. A safety board spokesman said the independent agency will send a "small group" including senior air-safety investigator Sathya Silva to China. Their travel was held up for several days to meet Chinese visa and COVID-19 regulations, and the NTSB appealed to the State Department to intervene.

China tries to limit economic blow of Shanghai shutdown

BEIJING (AP)—As millions of Shanghai residents line up for coronavirus tests in the closed-down metropolis, authorities are promising tax cuts for shopkeepers and to keep its busy port functioning to limit disruptions to industry and trade. This week's shutdown of most activities in China's most populous city to contain virus outbreaks jolted financial markets already on edge about Russia's war on Ukraine, higher U.S. interest rates and a Chinese economic slowdown. The ruling Communist Party is trying to fine-tune its "zero tolerance" pandemic strategy to rein in job losses and other costs to the world's second-largest economy. The Shanghai government has announced tax refunds, cuts in rent and low-cost loans for small businesses. A government statement Tuesday promised to "stabilize jobs" and "optimize the business environment."

FTC sues Intuit to stop 'bait-and-switch' TurboTax ads

The Federal Trade Commission is suing TurboTax maker Intuit, saying its ads for "free" tax filing misled consumers. Intuit says it will fight the suit. The consumer protection agency said Tuesday that millions of consumers cannot actually use the free tax-prep software option—two-thirds of tax filers in 2020. They are ineligible, the agency says, if they are gig workers or earn farm income, for example. "TurboTax is bombarding consumers with ads for 'free' tax filing services, and then hitting them with charges when it's time to file," said Samuel Levine, Director of the Bureau of Consumer Protection, in a statement. "We are asking a court to immediately halt this bait-and-switch, and to protect taxpayers at the peak of filing season." ***(AP)***

Media measuring company Nielsen to be acquired in $16B deal

Nielsen is being acquired for $16 billion, including debt, about a week after the media measurement company rejected a smaller offer earlier this month. Viewing data collected by Nielsen plays a big role in determining where billions in advertising dollars are spent each year. The company itself has annual global revenue of about $3.5 billion. A group of private equity investors led by Evergreen Coast Capital Corp., an affiliate of Elliott Investment Management L.P., and Brookfield Business Partners L.P. along with institutional partners will pay $28 for each outstanding Nielsen share. Brookfield Business Partners will invest approximately $2.65 billion via preferred equity, convertible into 45% of Nielsen's common equity. The equity version of the deal is worth just over $10 billion in cash, with the remainder in debt held by Nielsen. Brookfield said Tuesday that it anticipates investing approximately $600 million, with the remaining balance funded from institutional partners. ***(AP)***

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

AVAILABILITY OF THE HOMEOWNER ASSISTANCE FUND (HAF) PROGRAM
March 31, 2022

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) announces the availability of the Homeowner Assistance Fund Program made possible through the US Department of Treasury. The CNMI was allocated a total amount of ***$4,158,268*** in HAF funds, of which approximately 10% or $400,000 will be used for administrative expenses and approximately 90% or $3,758,268, will be used for the following types of assistance for CNMI ***homeowners:***

1) Mortgage delinquency assistance- an eligible homeowner may qualify for assistance of up to $25,400 (not to exceed a period of 12 months) to be used for homeowner's primary residence
2) Mortgage payment assistance- an eligible homeowner may qualify for assistance of up to $20,400 (not to exceed a period of 12 months) to be used for homeowner's primary residence
3) Past due and/or annual home-related insurance premiums- an eligible homeowner may qualify for assistance of up to $1,716 (not to exceed a period of 12 months) to be used for homeowner's primary residence
4) Utilities/Broadband Assistance:
   a. Each Homeowner will be eligible for up to $6,000 (not to exceed a period of 12 months) through this program with respect to the applicant's primary residence (to address delinquencies in utility payments)
   b. Each Homeowner will be eligible for up to $1,500 (not to exceed a period of 90 days) through this program with respect to the applicant's primary residence (to assist with future utility payments)
   c. Each Homeowner will be eligible for up to $600 (not to exceed a period of 12 months) through this program with respect to the applicant's primary residence (to address delinquency in broadband service payments)
   d. Each Homeowner will be eligible for up to $150 (not to exceed a period of 90 days) through this program with respect to the applicant's primary residence (to assist with future broadband service payments

Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Homeowners:
- Must be a resident of the CNMI
- Must meet the income limit: less than or equal to 150% area median income or less than the median income of the United States, whichever is greater (See income limits below)
- Must show proof of experiencing financial hardship after January 21, 2020, including a hardship that begun before January 21, 2020 but continued after that date
- Must show proof of mortgage delinquency (must be at least month delinquent) (for mortgage delinquency assistance)
- For those seeking insurance arrears assistance: Must show proof of insurance arrears (must be at least one month in arrears)
- Homeowner is at least one installment payment in arrears on one or more of the following: utilities, such as electric, gas, home energy, and water OR internet service, including broadband internet access service
- Statement of current inability to resume mortgage payments due to unemployment, underemployment or other continuing hardship
- Statement of current ability to resume any required regular payments after account is reinstated (OR) Ability to resume any required regular payments

Income Limits

FY 2021 HAF Income Limits Summary for Northern Mariana Islands								
	1-Person	2-Person	3-Person	4-Person	5-Person	6-Person	7-Person	8-Person
Greater of 100% AMI or 100% U.S. Median Income	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900
Greater of 150% AMI or 100% of U.S. Median Income	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900	$79,900	$85,050	$90,500

The pre-application for the HAF Program will be available, starting Thursday, March 31, 2022, at the NMHC Main Office in Garapan, Saipan and the Tinian and Rota Field Offices. The pre-application will also be available online on NMHC's website, www.nmhcgov.net (Public Notice/Announcements->Homeowner Assistance Fund Plan). Those who are interested in reviewing the HAF Plan and details of the program's terms can also visit the NMHC website. The application process will be ongoing until a notice is issued by NMHC and will be on a first come, first serve basis. Applications will only be accepted at the NMHC main and field offices. Should you have any questions, please contact Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director at (670) 234-6866

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"

Nation

Americans ease up on masks, virus safeguards: AP-NORC poll

By RUSS BYNUM and EMILY SWANSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Many Americans have taken significant steps back from once-routine coronavirus precautions, with less than half now saying they regularly wear face masks, avoid crowds and skip nonessential travel.

Americans are letting down their guard even as experts warn a new wave of COVID-19 cases is coming. A new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research shows fewer people taking protective measures than at any point in AP-NORC polls conducted since early 2021.

The poll found 44% say they often or always wear a face mask around people outside of their homes, down from 65% in January when infections of the highly contagious omicron variant were soaring. Just 40% say they're largely avoiding nonessential travel, compared with 60% in January. And 47% say they regularly stay away from large groups, down from 65% in January.

Most Americans say they at least sometimes still follow those safeguards. But they're increasingly returning to pre-pandemic norms as coronavirus infections have fallen to their lowest level since July.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention no longer recommends masking indoors for most Americans, while cities are liftingmask and vaccine requirements to enter restaurants, bars and concert venues. And more U.S. workers are returning to offices after two years of doing their jobs at home.

Judy Morgan, a retired teacher from Poulsbo, Washington, said she and her husband, a Navy veteran, have gradually become more relaxed about wearing masks and other precautions since getting their vaccine booster shots in late October. Roughly six weeks ago, she went back to shopping without a mask when the Navy base where she buys groceries stopped requiring face coverings.

"I figured when the military starts easing up, because they're pretty strict, that's a very good sign," said Morgan, 80.

Morgan and her husband plan to put their masks back on at the airport later this week when they fly to Florida to celebrate her birthday. She said they were extra cautious earlier in the pandemic because her husband has a heart condition that makes him more susceptible to severe illness from COVID-19—and she's ready to go back to that behavior if another severe wave of infections hits.

"My hope is that it's tapering off and every variation will be somewhat less viral or significant," Morgan said. "But my fear is something new will happen."

Experts say the coronavirus isn't going away, and most Americans recognize the virus will stick around. In January, an AP-NORC poll showed just 15% of Americans said the pandemic will be over when COVID-19 is mostly eliminated. Most said they expect the pandemic to end when it's largely a mild virus.

But that might not be the case just yet. Experts still say new variants could soon start another wave of rising infections in the U.S. Scientists are closely watching an extra-contagious spinoff of omicron that already has case numbers climbing in parts of Europe and Asia, as well as a delta-omicron hybrid, though so far infections of that variant appear to be rare.

Biden signs bill making lynching a federal hate crime

WASHINGTON (AP)—Presidents typically say a few words before they turn legislation into law. But Joe Biden flipped the script Tuesday when it came time to put his signature on the Emmett Till Anti-Lynching Act.

He signed the bill at a desk in the White House Rose Garden. Then he spoke.

"All right. It's law," said the president, who was surrounded by Vice President Kamala Harris, members of Congress and top Justice Department officials. He was also joined by a descendant of Ida B. Wells, a Black journalist who reported on lynchings, and Rev. Wheeler Parker, a cousin of Till.

Biden said it's "a little unusual to do the bill signing, not say anything and then speak. But that's how we set it up."

He thanked the audience of civil rights leaders, Congressional Black Caucus members and other guests who kept pushing for the law for "never giving up, never ever giving up."

Congress first considered anti-lynching legislation more than 120 years ago. Until March of this year, it had failed to pass such legislation nearly 200 times, beginning with a bill introduced in 1900 by North Carolina Rep. George Henry White, the only Black member of Congress at the time.

Harris was a prime sponsor of the bill when she was in the Senate.

The Emmett Till Anti-Lynching Act is named for the Black teenager whose killing in Mississippi in the summer of 1955 became a galvanizing moment in the civil rights era. His grieving mother insisted on an open casket to show everyone how her son had been brutalized.

"It's a long time coming," said Parker, who was onstage with Biden when the president signed the bill. Parker, two years older than Till, was with his cousin at their relatives' home in Mississippi and witnessed Till's kidnapping.

In his remarks, Biden acknowledged the struggle to get a law on the books, and spoke about how lynchings were used to terrorize and intimidate Blacks in the United States. More than 4,400 Blacks died by lynching between 1877 and 1950, mostly in the South, he said.

Buffalo police: 3 officers hit by gunfire during chase

Police gather at the scene of a shooting where three policeman were shot at East Ferry and Filmore Avenue in Buffalo, N.Y., Tuesday, March 29, 2022. AP

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP)—Three Buffalo police officers were hit by gunfire Tuesday after a motorist fled a rush-hour traffic stop and led officers on a long chase through the city's streets, while shots fired from the vehicle blasted through windows of the pursuing patrol cars, authorities said.

The wild chase ended at an intersection in front of a police station, where officers shot and wounded the driver.

None of the officers' injuries were life-threatening, police said, and no civilians on the street were hit by the flying bullets. One officer was saved from serious harm by a bulletproof vest. The other two were expected to make a full recovery.

The wounded motorist was undergoing surgery.

"This was a very brazen situation with a suspect shooting from a vehicle at police officers.... a very, very dangerous situation," said Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown at a news conference that took place at the hospital where the officers were taken.

Many details of the chase were still being sorted out by investigators, but authorities said it began around 6 p.m. when a vehicle that had been pulled over for a traffic stop suddenly drove off, Police Commissioner Joseph Gramaglia said.

As police pursued, the vehicle slowed to let someone out. After the passenger exited, gunfire started coming from the car.

Bullets continued to fly as officers chased the vehicle through the city, occasionally hitting their mark. One officer was hit in the arm. Another, in a different car, was wounded badly enough to require surgery. A third pursuing officer in another vehicle was hit in the vest.

A video posted on social media by one bystander showed the end of the pursuit: Officers took defensive positions with weapons drawn as sirens wailed, and then sent multiple volleys of shots at either a vehicle or a person who couldn't be seen on camera.

8-hour gap in Trump's Jan. 6 White House phone records

WASHINGTON (AP)—The House panel investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol has identified an almost 8-hour gap in official White House records of then-President Donald Trump's phone calls as the violence unfolded and his supporters stormed the building, according to two people familiar with the probe.

The gap extends from a little after 11 a.m. to about 7 p.m. on Jan. 6, 2021, and involves White House phone calls, according to one of the people. Both spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about the ongoing investigation.

The committee is investigating the gap in the official White House log, which includes the switchboard and a daily record of the president's activities. But it does not mean the panel is in the dark about what Trump was doing during that time.

The House panel has made broad requests for separate cell phone records and has talked to more than 800 witnesses, including many of the aides who spent the day with Trump. The committee also has thousands of texts from the cell phone of Mark Meadows, who was then Trump's chief of staff.

The committee's effort to piece together Trump's day as his supporters broke into the Capitol underscores the challenge that his habitual avoidance of records laws poses—not only to historians of his tumultuous four years but to the House panel, which intends to capture the full story of the former president's attempt to overturn the election results in hearings and reports later this year.

The committee has trained a particular focus on what the president was doing in the White House as hundreds of his supporters beat police, broke into the Capitol and interrupted the certification of Democrat Joe Biden's 2020 presidential election victory. The missing records raise questions of whether Trump purposefully circumvented official channels to avoid records.

Trump was known to use other people's cell phones to make calls, as well as his own. He often bypassed the White House switchboard, placing calls directly, according to a former aide who requested anonymity to discuss the private calls. It is not unusual for presidential calls to be channeled through other people.

Asia

Seoul says N. Korea fired old ICBM, not new one, last week

AP

This photo distributed by the North Korean government shows what it says is a test-fire of a Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile, at an undisclosed location in North Korea on March 24, 2022.

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea on Tuesday dismissed North Korea's claim to have launched a newly developed intercontinental ballistic missile last week, accusing the country of firing a less-powerful existing weapon and fabricating data following an earlier failed launch.

North Korea said it launched a Hwasong-17 missile, its longest-range developmental ICBM, last Thursday in its biggest weapons test in years. Its state media called the launch "a historical event" and released a stylized Hollywood-style video showing leader Kim Jong Un, in sunglasses and leather jacket, supervising the launch.

But South Korea's Defense Ministry said Tuesday it has determined that what North Korea fired wasn't a Hwasong-17 but a Hwasong-15, another ICBM that it successfully tested in 2017.

Both missiles are potentially capable of reaching the U.S. mainland. But analysts say the Hwasong-17 has a longer potential range and its huge size suggests that it's designed to carry multiple nuclear warheads to defeat missile defense systems. Believed to be about 25 meters (82 feet) long, the Hwasong-17 is, by some estimates, the world's biggest road-mobile ballistic missile system.

The Defense Ministry said it told a parliamentary committee that details of Thursday's launch -- such as the missile's speed, combustion and stage separation -- were similar to those of the Hwasong-15, not the Hwasong-17. The ministry report to the committee also suggested that the North Korean video wasn't shot on the actual launch date, citing an analysis of Kim's shadow and weather conditions seen in the video.

The report said the United States agreed with the South Korean assessment and is separately analyzing the launch.

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said Monday that Tokyo's assessment that North Korea launched a new type of ICBM remained unchanged. Matsuno said the missile poses a greater threat to Japan and the international community than other weapons North Korea has fired.

Thursday's launch was North Korea's most serious provocation since its Hwasong-15 launch in November 2017. It was also the latest in a slew of missile tests it has conducted this year in an apparent bid to modernize its arsenal and ramp up pressure on the Biden administration amid stalled nuclear talks between the two countries.

Afghan women boarding flights despite ban

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Afghan women unaccompanied by a male guardian have been allowed to board aircraft in the capital of Kabul since Saturday, airport officials said Tuesday, despite a Taliban order banning them from flying.

There has been no official reversal of the order by the hard-liners in the Taliban leadership, who have been crafting increasingly repressive edicts.

A senior airport official told The Associated Press on Tuesday that it is business as usual for women traveling alone, a sign that at least some of the orders coming from a conflicted Taliban leadership are being ignored.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media and he feared retaliation from the Taliban leadership. A second senior Taliban official also confirmed that the order was being ignored. That official also spoke on condition of anonymity for the same reasons.

In a separate show of dissent from within the Taliban ranks, police official Gen. Mobin Khan criticized a new order from the Ministry of Vice and Virtue ordering all government workers to have beards and wear the traditional turban. Beards are seen as a sign of piety.

Khan tweeted that it is a "strange system" that effectively shuts down a police or government department for three months until its officers can grow beards.

The edict demanding the wearing of beards and turbans was just the latest in a flurry of repressive edicts that followed a three-day meeting more than a week ago of Taliban leaders in their southern heartland of Kandahar.

The edicts have taken many Afghans and a wary international community by surprise as hard-liners appear to be pushing for dominance.

Since sweeping into power in August, the Taliban have struggled to transition from war to governing as their nation suffers a devastating humanitarian crisis and an economy that is in free fall. Taliban officials and Afghans familiar with the Taliban leadership say there are deep divisions about the way to govern Afghanistan.

World

Russian pledge to scale back in Ukraine draws skepticism

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Russia's pledge to scale back some military operations in Ukraine drew skepticism even as the two nations planned to return Wednesday to talks that could produce a framework for ending the war that has imposed an increasingly punishing toll.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said there was no reason to believe Russia's announcement that it would reduce military activity near Kyiv, the capital, as well as in the northern city of Chernihiv, given what's still happening on the ground.

"We can call those signals that we hear at the negotiations positive," he said in his nightly video address to the Ukrainian people. "But those signals don't silence the explosions of Russian shells."

It was a bitter reality check in a rare moment of optimism five weeks into what has devolved into a bloody war of attrition, with thousands dead and almost 4 million Ukrainians fleeing the country.

Earlier Tuesday, Ukraine's delegation at the conference, held in Istanbul, laid out a framework under which the country would declare itself neutral and its security would be guaranteed by an array of other nations.

Moscow's public reaction was positive, and the negotiations were expected to resume Wednesday in Istanbul.

Russian Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Fomin said Moscow has decided to "fundamentally ... cut back military activity in the direction of Kyiv and Chernihiv" to "increase mutual trust and create conditions for further negotiations."

He did not spell out what that would mean in practical terms.

Zelenskyy said it was Ukrainian troops who forced Russia's hand, adding that "we shouldn't let down our guard" because the invading army can still carry out attacks.

"Ukrainians are not naïve people," he said. "Ukrainians have already learned during the 34 days of the invasion and during the past eight years of war in the Donbas that you can trust only concrete results."

The U.S. and others also expressed doubts about Russia's intentions.

While Moscow portrayed it as a goodwill gesture, its ground troops have become bogged down and taken heavy losses in their bid to seize Kyiv and other cities. Last week and again on Tuesday, the Kremlin seemed to lower its war aims, saying its "main goal" now is gaining control of the mostly Russian-speaking Donbas region in eastern Ukraine.

U.S. President Joe Biden, asked whether the Russian announcement was a sign of progress in the talks or an attempt by Moscow to buy time to continue its assault, said: "We'll see. I don't read anything into it until I see what their actions are."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken suggested Russian indications of a pullback could be an attempt by Moscow to "deceive people and deflect attention."

It wouldn't be the first time. In the tense buildup to the invasion, the Russian military announced that some units were loading equipment onto rail cars and preparing to return to their home bases after completing exercises. At the time, Putin was signaling interest in diplomacy. But 10 days later, Russia launched its invasion.

Western officials say Moscow is now reinforcing troops in the Donbas in a bid to encircle Ukraine's forces. And Russia's deadly siege in the south continues, with civilians trapped in the ruins of Mariupol and other bombarded cities. The latest satellite imagery from commercial provider Maxar Technologies showed hundreds of people waiting outside a grocery store amid reports of food and water shortages.

"There is what Russia says and there is what Russia does, and we're focused on the latter," Blinken said in Morocco. "And what Russia is doing is the continued brutalization of Ukraine."

Even as negotiators gathered, Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces blasted a gaping hole in a nine-story government administration building in a strike on the southern port city of Mykolaiv, killing at least 12 people, emergency authorities said. The search for more bodies in the rubble continued.

Palestinian gunman kills 5 in in Israel

JERUSALEM (AP)—A gunman on a motorcycle opened fire in a crowded city in central Israel late Tuesday, methodically gunning down victims as he killed at least five people in the second mass shooting rampage this week. The shooter was killed by police.

The shooting appeared to be the latest in a string of attacks by Arab assailants ahead of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and the anniversary of last year's Gaza war. Israeli media said the attacker was a Palestinian from the West Bank. The previous two attacks, carried out by Arab citizens of Israel inspired by the Islamic State extremist group, have raised concerns of further violence.

Israel "stands before a wave of murderous Arab terrorism," declared Prime Minister Naftali Bennett. He pledged to combat it "with perseverance, stubbornness and an iron fist." He held an emergency meeting of top security officials and planned a meeting of his Security Cabinet on Wednesday.

Israeli authorities have not yet determined whether the string of attacks were organized or whether the attackers acted individually. The Israeli military announced it would be deploying additional troops to the West Bank, and the police chief raised the national readiness level to its highest.

Haitians protest rising insecurity; some burn a plane

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Haitians took to the streets Tuesday to protest rising insecurity, with demonstrations turning violent in the southern city of Les Cayes where people stormed the airport and attacked and burned a small plane owned by a U.S. missionary group.

At least one person died and five others were injured, including four police officers, in the confrontation between protesters and authorities in Les Cayes, said Gedeon Chery, a National Police inspector assigned to the city's airport.

Chery told The Associated Press the person killed was a protester who was shot, but he didn't say whether police were responsible.

A second small plane was burned at the local airport of the city of Jacmel, but it wasn't clear if it was also part of an attack by some protesters, said Garry Desrosiers, the National Police spokesman. The aircraft was non-operational and had been stationed there for a while, he added.

Environment

By IVA MAURIN
ivamaurin@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

This year, the CNMI is celebrating Environmental Awareness Month of April with the call to defend Mother Earth. But how can we do it? What can we do to defend our planet?

It is written in the law: Article I, Section 9 of the CNMI Constitution says, "Each person has the right to a clean and healthful public environment in all areas, including the land, air and water." All of us have the right to be blessed with all the great things nature offers, but, along with this right comes the responsibility to make sure nature remains pristine—so future generations will also be afforded this right that we are benefiting from today, just as generations before did for all of us.

Aside from April being Environmental Awareness Month in the CNMI, we are also joining the international community in the celebration of Earth Day on April 22, as we engage, along with the billion other participants, in accelerating solutions "to combat our greatest threat"—climate change.

"Everyone that calls this home, it is our obligation," Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said. "We are moving the CNMI into a world-class destination…hopefully within 10 years. If we all have the mindset of picking up after one another, then we are all in the right direction. …I ask that all citizens of the Commonwealth take an active interest in the environment and to protect it for future generations."

The governor led the call to defend the planet at the Environmental Awareness Month proclamation held yesterday at the Micro Beach Pavilion in Garapan, along with Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality administrator Eli Cabrera, Division of Environmental Quality director Zabrina S. Cruz, and Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance executive director Roberta Guerrero.

The proclamation calls on everyone not only to take part in enhancing the beauty of the islands, but also to understand that our every action impacts not only ourselves but the land we live on, the air we breathe, and the ocean that provides for everyone.

Raising awareness, Cruz said at the proclamation, is about three things—safety, dedication, and passion. That is, a healthy environment is a safe environment; that hard work and dedication are shown through collaborative efforts with the community; and that passion to protect and defend the planet, and the island from pollution and climate change, should be shared.

"Everything is about the environment—from the air to the mountains, to the land up to the waters. Let us work together. Let us protect our planet, this is ours," Cabrera added, tracing how environmental awareness programs on island began in the '80s, and has since been extended to the schools and the communities.

Guerrero highlighted at the proclamation several of these programs co-organized with the government and their many partners that are helping raise environmental awareness in the CNMI, including Ridge to Reef and the Schools for Environmental Conservation program.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, left, signs the proclamation that designates April as Environmental Awareness Month during a proclamation signing yesterday at the Micro Beach Pavilion in Garapan, as Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality administrator Eli Cabrera, center, and Mariana Islands Nature Alliance executive director Roberta Guerrero look on.

> "Defend our planet. *Difendi i tano'ta. Atelághi faluwasch.*"

"With the support and collaboration of all of you, we stand ready always to support you, as you support us in our programs. …We are teaching the youth about the importance of protecting our environment," she said.

Guerrero added that MINA is excited to bring the programs to Rota and Tinian, and that they are looking forward to these opportunities to continue on both islands.

We are stewards

House Natural Resources Committee chair Rep. Sheila Babauta (D-Saipan), said in an interview that it is critical that the CNMI community stays informed about the ever-changing environmental issues that surround us as an island community.

"Our livelihood, our well-being, our future are deeply connected to the environment," Babauta said. "Our ancestors have shown us that we are able to survive for thousands of years when we understand that, as humans, we are a part of this ecosystem. We are blessed. It is a privilege to serve as stewards of our wonderful, beautiful Mariana islands."

So what can we do as stewards? Simple acts can do so much for the environment. We can be stewards, defend our planet, make a difference and protect ourselves too with these simple actions:

1. Plant trees.

Planting trees—native trees or fruit trees—even in your own yard or garden helps a lot. If you don't have your own space but want to plant somewhere, make sure to consult first with CNMI Forestry or MINA on where best you can plant your tree. They also have volunteer events, like MINA's Bring Back Our Trees program, where you can join many others do their planting.

2. Pick up trash.

See a can or a piece of plastic at the beach or along the road as you are walking or jogging? Pick it up! One trash picked up means one trash away from the ocean. Don't want to pick up trash alone? Join community volunteer cleanup groups like Saipan Cleanup, Island Keepers CNMI, or Marianas Ploggers. Even government organizations such as BECQ and the CNMI Youth Affairs Office organize cleanup events that you can help with. But of course, make sure you throw your trash in the proper bins to begin with.

3. Be mindful of the plastic you consume.

Of the 10-most collected trash in the CNMI International Coastal Cleanup, seven are plastic—bottle caps, food wrappers, bottles, cutlery, straws and stirrers, grocery and other plastic bags. We have the power to stop, or at least, lessen this, by simply using reusable water bottles, packing balutans in reusable containers, avoiding using straws, or bringing reusable bags when buying groceries.

4. Switch off to save energy.

Turn off lights when not in use, or simply turning off unnecessary lights and taking advantage of natural light helps save energy big time. Other things that we can do to tone down our energy consumption is by not using AC 24/7 if not necessary, using clothesline to dry laundry, and unplugging unused electronics.

5. Advocate!

Start petitions for the environment. Contact your representatives or encourage your school to take actions toward environmental protection like advocating for reusable bottles and bags, greening the schools and communities, segregating trash, demanding for cleaner power, among many others! Use your voice and be heard!

2022 Environmental Awareness

To celebrate the Environmental Awareness month, BECQ has lined up activities for the public to both enjoy and learn from. Be sure to check out these activities, join the wave (or honk!), and volunteer at the cleanup if you can:

■ April 1: Environmental Awareness Month Waving at the Garapan Fishing Base on Friday, April 1, from 3:30 to 4:30pm.

■ April 7, 8, 21, 28, and 29: BECQ Laboratory Tours (by appointment only). BECQ will be opening up their facilities for Lab Tours to schools to give students a glimpse on what happens at the laboratory. To sign up, email Miso Sablan (miso.sablan@becq.gov.mp) or Charito Bautista (charito.bautista@becq.gov.mp), or call (670) 664-8500.

■ April 9: MIHA Wetland Cleanup. Prior to the island-wide cleanup on Earth Day, BECQ will also be leading a cleanup at the MIHA wetland, located next to Paradise Hotel in Garapan.

■ April 19 and 20: Environmental Expo at the CNMI Museum. Natural resources groups will be providing presentations for school groups on how students can all best help protect the environment.

■ April 22 and 23: Islandwide Cleanup. Community groups and organizations (school classes/clubs, sport/church groups, private organizations, and government agencies) – basically everyone – is invited to participate in this year's Island-Wide Cleanup, happening on Earth Day Friday, April 22, from 3:30pm to 4:30pm, and on Saturday, April 23, from 8am to 10am. To volunteer and register the site you and your group want to clean up, email Tom Pangelinan (tom.pangelinan@becq.gov.mp) or Edward S. Dela Cruz (edward.delacruz@becq.gov.mp), or call (670) 664-8500.

Life & Style

Foo Fighters cancel all dates following drummer's death

NEW YORK (AP)—Foo Fighters have canceled all upcoming concert dates following the death of the band's drummer, Taylor Hawkins.

The rockers had been scheduled to play at the Grammy Awards in Las Vegas on Sunday as well as spring dates at the Beale Street Music Festival; the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival; Columbia, Maryland; Raleigh, North Carolina; Daytona Beach, Florida; Charlotte, North Carolina; the Boston Calling Music Festival; and summer dates in Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, France and the UK.

"It is with great sadness that Foo Fighters confirm the cancellation of all upcoming tour dates in light of the staggering loss of our brother," the band said in a statement Tuesday.

Hawkins died Friday during a South American tour with the rock band. He was 50.

"We're sorry for and share in the disappointment that we won't be seeing one another as planned," the band's statement read. "Instead, let's take this time to grieve, to heal, to pull our loved ones close, and to appreciate all the music and memories we've made together."

Hawkins was Alanis Morissette's touring drummer when he joined Foo Fighters in 1997. He played on the band's biggest albums including "One by One" and "In Your Honor," and on hit singles like "Best of You."

'The Flash' actor Ezra Miller is arrested at Hawaii karaoke bar

Miller

HONOLULU (AP)—An actor known for playing "The Flash" in "Justice League" films was arrested after an incident at a Hawaii karaoke bar, where police say Ezra Miller yelled obscenities, grabbed a mic from a singing woman and lunged at a man playing darts.

Miller took issue late Sunday with people singing the Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper ballad "Shallow" at a bar mostly frequented by locals in Hilo, a small town on the Big Island, Hawaii Police Assistant Chief Kenneth Quiocho said.

The song aggravated Miller, Quiocho said.

Miller, described by police as a 29-year-old visitor from Stamford, Vermont, has been the source of police calls in Hilo 10 times since March 7, Quiocho said, adding it's not clear how long Miller has been on the island.

They were "manini" incidents—a Hawaii Pidgin term that can mean minor or small—such as filming people at a gas station, refusing to leave the sidewalk area of a restaurant and arguing with people, Quiocho said.

Will Smith would face little more than a slap if charged

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Will Smith's slap seen 'round the world at the Oscars was clearly a crime, legal experts say, but the chances of prosecution are slim and even if convicted he'd likely face little more than a slap of his own—on the wrist.

Smith left millions of witnesses stunned Sunday when he marched onto the stage of the Dolby Theatre and smacked Chris Rock in the face after the comedian made a joke about his wife, Jada Pinkett Smith, who was sitting with the actor in the front row.

The Los Angeles Police Department has said it was aware of the incident but was not investigating because Rock declined to file a police report.

While police could technically open an investigation based on the Academy Awards broadcast, they wouldn't do so without Rock's participation, said defense lawyer Alan Jackson, a former Los Angeles County prosecutor who oversaw high-profile cases.

"Would they ever in a practical world do that when Chris Rock is saying, 'I won't cooperate with a criminal investigation?' Not in a million years," Jackson said. "LAPD is probably breathing a relative sigh of relief that they don't have to get involved with two high-profile actors duking it out on a world stage."

The Los Angeles city attorney's office, which prosecutes misdemeanor crimes, declined to comment, but said it couldn't bring charges without a police referral.

"If he's going to be charged, I can't speak to what the charge would be," spokesman Rob Wilcox said.

News of celebrities in trouble has been a fixture in LA since Hollywood's early days, and questions frequently arise about whether the rich and powerful receive a different brand of justice.

"The celebrity thing is coming into play, unfortunately," said former LA District Attorney Steve Cooley. "If some Joe Blow committed this act in front a police officer, would he would be able to walk away from it? Probably not."

If Smith is not charged, it could imperil the justice system's credibility, said Jody Armour, a law professor at the University of Southern California.

"How can what appears to be an obvious criminal act committed in the open publicly not result in any criminal consequences?" Armour asked. "Do different standards apply to celebrities and noncelebrities? Apparently, we seem to all recognize that is the case. But what does that recognition say to us about the legitimacy and credibility of our criminal justice system?"

While the famous can use their status to influence decision-makers, their fame can work against them if the prosecutor decides to make an example of a crime by someone well-known.

Alec and Hilaria Baldwin are expecting their 7th child

NEW YORK (AP)—After a nearly monthlong social media break, Hilaria Baldwin announced Tuesday on Instagram that she's expecting her seventh child with husband Alec.

Hilaria said she's due this fall, posting a video of the couple breaking the news to their brood. Alec Baldwin quickly reposted her reveal.

"After many ups and downs over the past few years, we have an exciting up and a huge surprise: another Baldwinito is coming this fall," she wrote, adding a yellow heart emoji. "We were pretty sure our family was complete, and we're beyond happy with this surprise."

Alec Baldwin, left, and Hilaria Baldwin appear at the 69th Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles on Sept. 17, 2017. Hilaria Baldwin is expecting baby No. 7. She announced Tuesday on Instagram that she's expecting, sharing a video of the moment she and Alec told their kids. (PHOTO BY JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/AP, FILE)

Alec is also the father of a 25-year-old daughter, Ireland Baldwin, with his first wife, Kim Basinger.

On Oct. 21 last year, Alec Baldwin was involved in the fatal shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins on the New Mexico set of the Western film "Rust." Her family is suing him and the movie's other producers, alleging their "callous" disregard in the face of safety complaints on the set led directly to her death.

At least four other lawsuits have been filed over the shooting. Baldwin, who was to star in the film, was pointing a gun at Hutchins inside a small church during setup for the filming of a scene when it went off, killing Hutchins and wounding the director, Joel Souza.

Imprisoned man worries his girlfriend is missing out

DEAR ABBY: I am a 26-year-old man, and I'm currently incarcerated. My girlfriend, "Diana," and I have been together for four years. She has a 6-year-old daughter, and I have a 7-year-old son. Our kids are very close, and I am also very close to her daughter.

I may be locked up for some time. I have given Diana the option of moving on without me, but she says she doesn't want to do that. She is going to stay with me no matter what. That's great, but everyone around her is pregnant and having babies, and Diana tells me how much she wants another baby. Is it selfish of me to allow her to stick it out with me, knowing I can't give her what she wants?

INSIDE IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR INSIDE: Diana is a grown woman and capable of making this decision for herself. Just because "everyone around her" is having babies doesn't mean she has to. If she wants to wait for your release, she can have a child with you at that time, and this is what I am advising.

DEAR ABBY: I need some help trying to save my marriage. I don't talk a lot in a relationship or with other people. I am aware that communication is important in a relationship, but I never realized how important it was until my wife told me I don't communicate enough and we started talking about divorce.

We have a 4-year-old, who I think is the glue to our marriage. I would like our marriage to last, but I'm afraid ours is so far gone it can't be fixed. Could you please help me try to save our marriage?

HANGING IN THERE OUT WEST

DEAR HANGING: Tell your wife you love her and are willing to work on your communication skills with her help, if she is willing. If her response is affirmative, the two of you should seek a referral to a licensed clinical social worker or a licensed marriage and family therapist to help you learn to communicate with each other more effectively.

DEAR ABBY: I love trains. I can imitate a train whistle, and I like doing it. I learned how to do it about 10 years ago by listening to trains whistle for many years. I'm in my 30s now. I know there are places I shouldn't do it. Some people I know like to hear me do it anywhere. Others say I should do it only outside. Still others say don't do it at all.

When I see and hear a train, I will sometimes automatically whistle. It's not the best thing to do, I suppose, but it's not the worst either. I don't drink, smoke or do drugs, and I'm fairly healthy. What do you think of my imitating a train whistle? Have you ever heard of anyone doing this?

WHISTLING IN WISCONSIN

DEAR WHISTLING: Congratulations. Your letter is a first. I have never heard of someone imitating a train whistle who was over the age of 8. I see no harm in doing it as long as it doesn't annoy the people around you by startling them or putting their hearing at risk.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

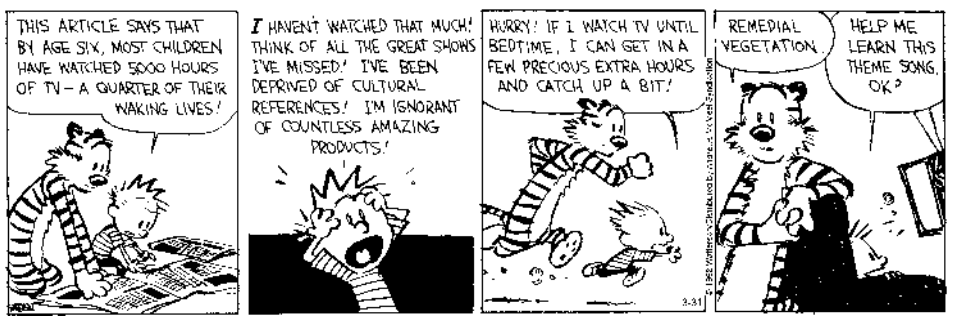
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

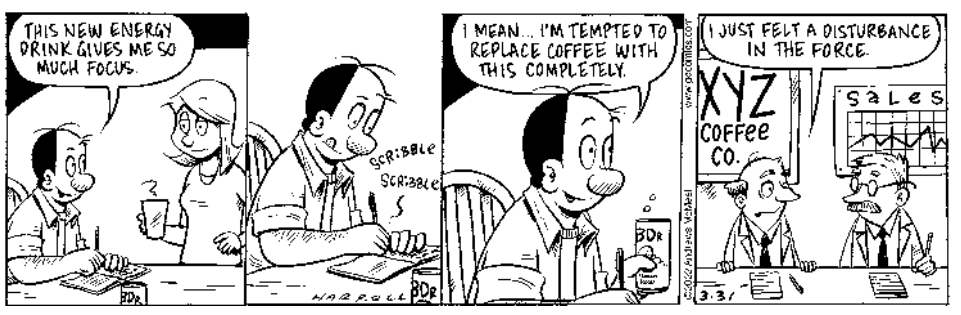

THIS ARTICLE SAYS THAT BY AGE SIX, MOST CHILDREN HAVE WATCHED 5000 HOURS OF TV – A QUARTER OF THEIR WAKING LIVES!
I HAVEN'T WATCHED THAT MUCH! THINK OF ALL THE GREAT SHOWS I'VE MISSED! I'VE BEEN DEPRIVED OF CULTURAL REFERENCES! I'M IGNORANT OF COUNTLESS AMAZING PRODUCTS!
HURRY! IF I WATCH TV UNTIL BEDTIME, I CAN GET IN A FEW PRECIOUS EXTRA HOURS AND CATCH UP A BIT!
REMEDIAL VEGETATION.
HELP ME LEARN THIS THEME SONG, OK?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

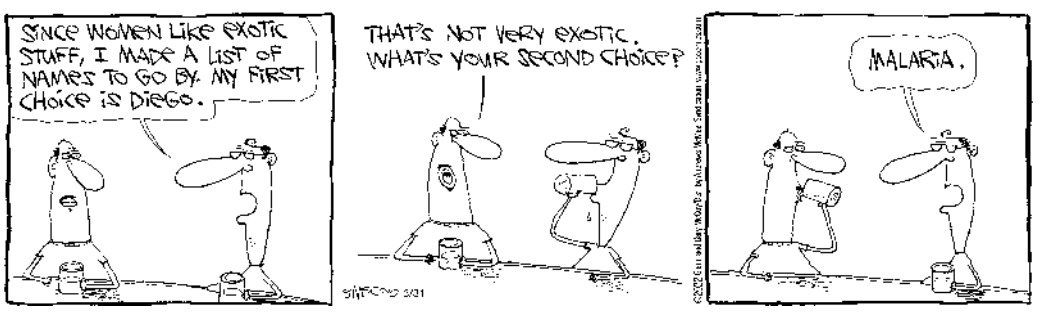
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


THIS NEW ENERGY DRINK GIVES ME SO MUCH FOCUS.
SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE
I MEAN... I'M TEMPTED TO REPLACE COFFEE WITH THIS COMPLETELY.
I JUST FELT A DISTURBANCE IN THE FORCE.
XYZ COFFEE CO.
SALES
3.31

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


SINCE WOMEN LIKE EXOTIC STUFF, I MADE A LIST OF NAMES TO GO BY. MY FIRST CHOICE IS DIEGO.
THAT'S NOT VERY EXOTIC. WHAT'S YOUR SECOND CHOICE?
MALARIA.
3/31

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

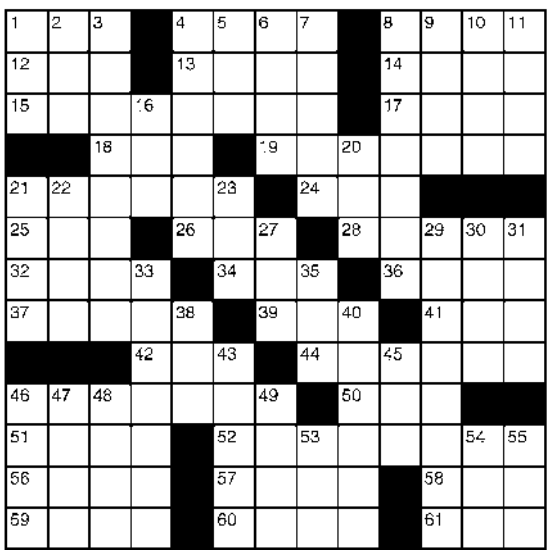
ACROSS
1 Prof's degree
4 Spiders' art
8 Radiate
12 Owned by us
13 Send forth
14 Vow
15 Low-humidity spa amenity
17 Low calorie
18 "2001" computer
19 Chip material
21 Daredevil's feats
24 "Traffic" org.
25 Highland hat
26 Haw preceder
28 Community spirit
32 Cupid's alias
34 Santa's aide
36 Blood (Pref.)
37 Shopping centers
39 Wet dirt
41 Genetic letters
42 UFO passengers
44 Fix
46 Smuggle
50 Crony
51 Joule fractions
52 Harry Potter's skill
56 Move, in Realtor lingo
57 Hairstylist José
58 — Speedwagon
59 Hidden valley
60 Car door damage
61 Ghanaian export

DOWN
1 Group of seals
2 "Ben- —"
3 Steven Wright's wit
4 Affluence
5 Ostrich's kin
6 Cribs
7 Composed
8 Biblical giant
9 Secular
10 "Simpsons" bus driver
11 Timely query?
16 — Salvador
20 Grant's foe
21 Goblet feature
22 Actress Reid
23 Observe
27 Shade tree
29 Coat of arms system
30 Hotel chain
31 Fly high
33 Broad-brimmed hat
35 Cat's coat
38 Cardinal cap letters
40 Leave
43 Stitched
45 Standard
46 Titanic destroyer
47 Baseball's Hershiser
48 Leer at
49 Taunt
53 Buddhist sect
54 Irish actor Stephen
55 — Kippur

Solution time: 24 mins.

M	O	C		G	N	A	W		B	R	R	R
E	H	A		H	O	N	A		A	O	U	I
S	E	I		I	H	O	N	S	I	O	N	E
H	O	H	U	M			D	O	H			
			R	A	C	K		D	E	T	E	R
I	Π	O	N	C	H	E	F		D	O	R	A
S	O	N		E	A	R	L	S		N	I	T
I	T	C	H		I	R	C	N	M	I	K	E
S	H	E	A	R		:	W	O	N			
			U	A	W			W	O	O	C	D
I	R	O	N	W	O	R	K	S		S	A	I
M	A	-	T		V	'	I	'		L	O	N
C	D	E	S		E	B	A	N		O	S	E

Yesterday's answer 3-31



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jessica Szohr, 37; Ewan McGregor, 51; Christopher Walken, 79; Shirley Jones, 88.

Happy Birthday: Put your heart and soul into whatever you do this year. Get the lowdown, focus on a plan and wade toward your goal with intent and desire. Your enthusiasm will be infectious and draw interest and support from people who offer innovative suggestions to make your life easier and the results spectacular. Hard work will cultivate stability and give you peace of mind. Your numbers are 8, 15, 24, 30, 33, 37, 42.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Intelligence and persuasiveness will be your tickets to success. Express your thoughts, use the experience to get others to see things your way. You'll gain knowledge and clout by following through with your plans. Personal gain is apparent. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Put your energy where it counts. How much you accomplish will determine what happens next. Bold action will ward off criticism and complaints that can taint your reputation or put you in a defensive position. Play to win. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Keep your life simple, your plans doable and your expenditures reasonable. The decisions you make and the information you share will determine how much help you'll receive. Abide by the rules and regulations, even if others choose not to follow suit. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Work alone, or at least avoid conversations about sensitive issues. Getting into a nasty debate won't solve the problem or help you take care of your responsibilities. Pay attention to your job, and don't lose sight of your goal. Listen and learn. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Pay attention to what others say, and you'll learn a lot about life and what you can do to excel. A partnership nurtured lovingly will enhance your life and encourage advantages that influence what you do moving forward. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Look for the good in everything and everyone. A positive attitude will help you bring about worthwhile change. You have more options than you realize. Discuss your likes and dislikes with someone you want to associate with as you move forward. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Don't act quickly. Be smart, and follow through if you have reservations or feel you can do better elsewhere. Own the stage, and set priorities that suit your needs. Speak from the heart, and align yourself with people who share your sentiments. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Step back if you aren't ready to decide. Stay put until you grasp a better understanding of potential consequences. Don't be fooled by someone who doesn't share your vision. Mull over concerns, and do what's in your best interest. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Rely on sources you can trust. Someone's experience can offer a wealth of information to help you decide what you need to do. Put your emotions aside, and use intelligence when dealing with those who share your space. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Do something that excites you. Let your creativity flow, and you'll discover a way to mix what you do well with something that exhilarates you. Don't get into discussion with a friend or relative who likes to play devil's advocate. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Stop and think before making a move. Don't follow in someone's footsteps when doing your own thing is the route to happiness and satisfaction. Think your plan through, and forge into the sunset with determination and an open mind. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* You'll have plenty of ideas, but before you convince others to participate in your scheme, make sure you can provide the results you promise. Your reputation relies on your ability to deliver while abiding by the rules and regulations. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are persistent, intense and enthusiastic. You are open and resourceful.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	7		2		5			
	4	6		8	3			
	8		2		3		7	
2				1				4
	3		9		7		5	
		5	3		1	9		
		2		7		6		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/31

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	4	7	5	2	9	3	6	8
2	5	3	8	6	4	1	7	9
8	9	6	1	7	3	5	4	2
7	6	8	2	9	1	4	3	5
9	1	4	7	3	5	2	8	6
3	2	5	4	8	6	7	9	1
5	3	1	9	4	8	6	2	7
4	8	2	6	1	7	9	5	3
6	7	9	3	5	2	8	1	4

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

MONTREAL SUMMER FESTIVALS — Solution: 12 letters

S	A	S	G	N	I	N	E	E	R	C	S	T	R	S
P	N	T	A	G	A	E	H	S	O	C	I	S	U	M
F	R	O	S	S	E	M	U	T	E	K	U	E	N	L
A	S	O	I	E	J	X	E	S	U	O	H	F	W	I
N	T	T	G	T	I	F	H	R	N	A	Y	O	A	F
T	R	H	G	R	A	F	F	I	T	I	R	O	Y	E
A	E	O	C	S	A	M	I	F	B	E	O	Z	G	G
S	C	L	H	A	C	M	I	R	U	I	S	Z	Y	A
I	N	I	T	A	L	I	A	N	A	Z	T	D	S	T
A	O	R	U	E	U	E	E	R	A	C	E	I	H	S
N	C	H	S	A	B	V	N	F	K	M	R	E	O	S
I	P	A	R	K	S	X	E	D	O	E	A	C	W	N
G	R	A	N	D	A	S	I	C	A	V	T	N	S	E
H	T	S	T	R	E	E	T	R	Y	R	I	A	V	A
T	A	C	I	N	K	I	P	L	P	R	I	D	E	K

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Animations, Artisan, Bash, Calendar, Carifiesta, Clubs, Comedy, Concerts, Dance, Euro, Exhibition, Fantasia, Fashion, Films, First, Graffiti, Grand, Heavy, Holi, House, Italian, Market, Music, Mutek, Night, Osheaga, Parks, Peak, Piknic, Pride, Prix, Program, Roster, Runway, Screenings, Shows, Sneak, Stage, Street, Szioni, Venue, Yoga, Zootfest

Yesterday's Answer: Conditions

The NEW **Treasuries 46 and 47** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Antetokounmpo's 40 points, late block lead Bucks past 76ers

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Giannis Antetokounmpo's game is no laughing matter. His jokes? Well, they could use some work.

Antetokounmpo scored 40 points and had a game-deciding block of Joel Embiid in the final seconds to lead the Milwaukee Bucks to a 118-116 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers on Tuesday night in a matchup of two of the Eastern Conference's top teams.

Khris Middleton added 22 points and Jrue Holiday had 18 for the Bucks, who pulled within a half-game of idle Miami for first place in the East.

Milwaukee was clinging to a two-point lead when Antetokounmpo swatted away Embiid's put-back attempt with 1.6 seconds left.

"Spectacular block," 76ers coach Doc Rivers said.

"Just a special block," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said.

It was an amazing play.

Antetokounmpo, though, seemed more eager to test out his material from his postgame read, a book titled "Dad Jokes," and opened his postgame press conference like this:

Q: What do you call a cow on the floor?

A: Ground beef

Antetokounmpo seemed amused by the joke, which drew only light chuckles from reporters. If not an air ball, it certainly seemed like a miss.

His game, however, continues to get rave reviews.

"We count on him to make big plays," Middleton said. "We don't expect him to make that block, but when he does, we're not surprised."

Said Holiday, "Giannis just being Giannis. Made a great play and saved the game."

James Harden had 32 points and nine rebounds for the 76ers, and Embiid recovered from a slow start and finished with 29 points, 14 rebounds and seven assists. Philadelphia dropped 1½ behind the Heat in the conference.

"Couple mistakes defensively and they made us pay for it," Harden said.

Antetokounmpo added 14 rebounds, six assists and three blocks for the defending NBA champion Bucks.

The Bucks scored 13 of the first 17 points of the fourth, going in front on Middleton's 3-pointer that made it 94-93 with nine minutes to play. The game remained close the rest of the way, with neither team going up by more than six points.

Every time it looked as if Milwaukee was going to pull away, the 76ers answered with a 3 to stay close. Embiid's 3-pointer with 49.8 seconds left pulled Philadelphia within 117-116. After a turnover by Brook Lopez, Philadelphia had a chance to go in front, but Embiid missed a 14-footer following a timeout.

Antetokounmpo was fouled on the ensuing possession and made the first of two free throws to put the Bucks up 118-116 with 13.2 seconds to play. After another 76ers timeout, Harden's step-back 3 was long. Embiid grabbed the rebound and looked primed to tie it with an easy layup, but Antetokounmpo blocked it. The officials originally ruled that it was goaltending, tying the score, but it was overturned after a video review.

"Just let my instincts play," Antetokounmpo said. "I just tried to jump as high as I can and make a play."

The 76ers controlled the ensuing jump ball but ran out of time for a shot.

AP

Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo, right, goes up for a shot against Philadelphia 76ers' Tobias Harris, center, and Paul Millsap during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, March

Antetokounmpo and Harden traded first-half highlights, with the Bucks star and two-time MVP dunking on Embiid with his left hand late in the first quarter before a thunderous, two-handed jam late in the second. Harden scored over Antetokounmpo with his trademark step-back 3 with 35.7 seconds left in the first and connected with Matisse Thybulle with a beautiful three-quarter court pass to set Thybulle up for an easy dunk.

The game pitted a pair of teams that have their eyes on the NBA title. The Bucks broke a long title drought last season, earning the franchise's second title after winning their first in 1971. Philadelphia last won a championship in 1983, and the 76ers added Harden at the trade deadline to bolster their chances of the franchise's fourth title.

Milwaukee has been one of the NBA's best teams since the All-Star break, going 11-4 as it gears up for another postseason run. Philadelphia coach Doc Rivers said he doesn't hear the Bucks enough when NBA title contenders are mentioned.

"I hear everybody but Milwaukee," Rivers said. "They didn't luck into winning."

Clippers 121, Jazz 115

In Los Angeles, Paul George scored 34 points in his return after missing three months and Los Angeles rallied from 25 points down to beat Utah.

Reggie Jackson added 21 points for the Clippers, who snapped a five-game skid with a 39-point fourth quarter after trailing by 16 early in the period.

From there, the Clippers outscored Utah 34-12 to end the game. The Clippers took their first lead of the game, 110-109, on a jumper by Isaiah Hartenstein.

Donovan Mitchell scored 33 points and Mike Conley added 19 points for the Jazz, whose losing streak stretched to five.

Mavericks 128, Lakers 110

In Dallas, Luka Doncic had 34 points, 12 rebounds and 12 assists, and Dallas routed Los Angeles, which was missing LeBron James because of an ankle issue.

The Lakers (31-44) are tied with San Antonio for the final play-in spot in the Western Conference with seven games remaining for both teams.

Malik Monk scored 28 points and Russell Westbrook had 25 for the Lakers, who dropped their third straight for their fifth losing streak at least that long in the past two months.

Doncic had 25 points in the first half as Dallas scored a season-high 82 for a 26-point lead. The 23-year-old star secured his first triple-double in almost two months and 10th of the season with an offensive rebound for a layup that gave him 32 points and put Dallas up 101-65 with 6:58 left in the third quarter. Doncic sat the fourth.

Nets 130, Pistons 123

In New York, Kevin Durant scored 41 points and Brooklyn rallied past Detroit.

Kyrie Irving added 24 points in his second home appearance since New York exempted athletes from a private employer mandate for COVID-19 vaccinations last week. Andre Drummond had 14 points and 13 rebounds as Brooklyn overcame a double-digit deficit in the second quarter.

Cade Cunningham led the Pistons with 34 points. Isaiah Stewart and Saddiq Bey each had 15.

The game was tied at 108 in the fourth quarter when Durant's pull-up jumper followed by two free throws and Seth Curry's 3-pointer gave Brooklyn the lead for good.

Bulls 107, Wizards S 94

In Washington, DeMar DeRozan scored 14 of his 32 points in the fourth quarter and Chicago beat Washington.

Nikola Vucevic scored 27 points for Chicago, which is trying to stay in the top six in the Eastern Conference and avoid the play-in round of the postseason. The Bulls (44-32) took a half-game lead over Toronto (43-32) for fifth place in the East.

Rui Hachimura scored 21 points for the Wizards, who had their modest two-game winning streak snapped. Kentavious Caldwell-Pope added 20. 664-0

James, Davis watch debacle in Dallas as Lakers await return

DALLAS (AP)—LeBron James and Anthony Davis were together on the bench for a Los Angeles debacle in Dallas that further endangered the postseason hopes of the Lakers.

Now the club waits to see when the All-Star pair will be together on the floor again, and whether it will be in time to secure a play-in spot for the second consecutive year for the 2020 champs.

James missed the 128-110 loss to the Mavericks, which included deficits of 30 points in the first half and 37 in the second, with soreness and swelling in his sprained right ankle.

Davis is on the brink of returning after being out since Feb. 16 with a right midfoot sprain. He also missed a month with a knee injury, so the title-winning pair from two years ago in the playoff bubble has been limited to 21 games together this season.

AP

Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James walks the floor in street clothes during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Dallas Mavericks in Dallas, Tuesday, March 29, 2022.

If No. 22 doesn't come soon, it might be too late. Technically, the Lakers (31-44) are out of the Western Conference play-in tournament at the moment. LA is tied for 10th, the final spot, with San Antonio, which holds the tiebreaker.

Vogel said a decision on the possible return of Davis, along with James' status, would be updated before the Lakers play at Utah on Thursday to end a three-game trip.

The Lakers play again Friday at home against New Orleans. The Pelicans are ninth in the West, a game ahead of the Lakers and Spurs.

"The standings are the results," coach Frank Vogel said. "We have to keep our focus on the process and the work. Those things are going to lead to the next win. That's the only place our focus will be."

James, the NBA scoring leader, and Davis were listed as doubtful for the Dallas game, which was actually an upgrade for Davis. The eight-time All-Star went through a full practice for the first time since his injury Monday in Dallas.

"Obviously, this whole thing is built around them," said Stanley Johnson, who tied his season high with 16 points against the Mavericks. "It's a lot easier to play basketball for me, for everybody else when they're playing. But if they're hurt and they can't play, we have to be professionals as well and do our job. We have to play better than that."

NFL owners approve rule change for OT in playoffs

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—It took a few years, and for many fans that probably was too long.

Still, the NFL has heard the cries of "unfair" and has adjusted its overtimes rules.

Only for the postseason, though.

The NFL is changing the sometimes controversial overtime rules to guarantee each side gets the ball in the playoffs.

Concerned that the coin toss to begin the extra period has too much impact on postseason game results, the owners voted Tuesday to permanently approve a proposal presented by the Colts and Eagles.

Beginning this season, if the team possessing the ball first in overtime scores a touchdown on that series, the opponent still gets a possession. In recent seasons, that touchdown would have ended the game.

That second possession of overtime would extend beyond the initial 15-minute period if needed. Should that team tie the game, it then would become sudden death.

Outcries began back in the February 2017 Super Bowl when Tom Brady completed an incredible comeback from a 28-3 deficit to tie the game. The Patriots won the coin toss, marched to a touchdown and beat the Falcons.

In the 2018 season, New England won the AFC title on the first series of OT without Kansas City getting the ball.

When the same thing happened in Kansas City during this January's divisional game between the Bills and the Chiefs, won by KC, a groundswell became an uproar.

"We always listen to fans," Commissioner Roger Goodell said. "What brought this decision was the database and the facts. When you see that, this is an issue in the postseason."

Rich McKay, the Falcons president and chairman of the competition committee, admitted that Kansas City's victory over Buffalo was a factor in the balloting by owners. He said that was well beyond the required 24 votes, but would not reveal the exact numbers.

"I think what the stats show is there is a clear issue we can say since the change (in rules) in 2010," McKay added, "and the problem comes in the postseason."

Since the previous overtime rule was instituted for the regular season in 2012, the team that wins the coin toss has won the game half of the time (76 of 152 games). However, both teams have had at least one possession in 82% of the games (124 of 152).

Those numbers changed quite a bit in the postseason. Since 2010, when that rule was instituted for the playoffs, seven of the 12 overtime games have been won on an opening possession touchdown, and 10 of 12 have been won by the team that won the coin toss.

AP

NFL CommissionerRoger Goodell answers questions from reporters at a press conference following the close of the NFL owner's meeting, Tuesday, March 29, 2022, at The Breakers resort in Palm Beach,

"That data was compelling to us and to the league," McKay said. "An amendment was added (to the original proposal by the Colts and Eagles) to not make a change in the regular season, but in the postseason, where our problem principally lies."

The Titans had recommended that both teams possess the ball in overtime unless the team receiving the kickoff scores a touchdown and a 2-point conversion. That would end the game. But the owners, perhaps believing the Tennessee suggestion was too gimmicky, went with the other proposal.

Under previous rules, the 10-minute overtime in the regular season only continued if the team getting the ball first failed to score or kicked a field goal. Should the side receiving the kickoff make a field goal, the team that first played defense would get a possession in which it can score a touchdown and win, or kick a field goal and play would continue — if time allowed.

Of course, in the postseason, when there are no ties, overtimes continue until someone has more points.

Goodell concluded the meetings by urging caution regarding the Deshaun Watson situation and the NFL's investigation. The quarterback, who did not play for Houston last season after 22 women accused him of sexual misconduct, will not be indicted on criminal charges. Now with the Cleveland Browns after a trade, Watson still faces civil lawsuits.

"We're going to let the facts lead us, find every fact we can," Goodell said. "At least there is a resolution from the criminal side of it. Our investigation hopefully will have access to more information."

As for a potential suspension for Watson, Goodell noted that a discipline officer jointly appointed by the league and players' union would make that determination.

Goodell said if the league discovers a violation in Dolphins owner Stephen Ross' conduct regarding the integrity of the game, the information would be released publicly. Former Dolphins coach Brian Flores has sued the NFL and three teams (Miami, Denver and the New York Giants), claiming racist hiring practices. Flores also has accused Ross of offering him a bonus to lose games in 2019, something the owner vigorously has denied.

Earlier Tuesday, Carolina coach Matt Rhule voiced his support of a potential change — something that many owners agreed with, if only for the postseason.

"You get a shot, I get a shot," Rhule said, "and may the best team win."

Troy Vincent, who oversees NFL football operations, echoed Rhule's sentiment, saying that football fans have expressed the same opinion.

"The fan wants to see his quarterback touch the ball, and the data drove us to that," Vincent said.

The owners also approved an anti-tampering rule that prohibits a team seeking an assistant general manager from asking permission for an interview until after the draft. As Vincent explained, someone in personnel for one team who has been involved in draft preparation should not be available for hire by another club until the draft is over.

Once the draft has concluded — this year that is April 30 — the employing team must grant permission for such interviews.

NFL makes adjustments to Rooney Rule to aid minority hiring

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—To ensure more opportunities for diverse candidates, the NFL has added requirements on the hiring of offensive assistant coaches, and women in general.

The moves announced Monday at the owners meeting include adjustments to the Rooney Rule adopted in 2003 and amended frequently in attempts to enhance opportunities for people of color and women for nearly all league and team jobs.

Beginning this season, all 32 clubs must employ a female or a member of an ethnic or racial minority to serve as an offensive assistant coach. The person will receive a one-year contract and work closely with the head coach and offensive staff to gain experience.

In recent years, head coaches have predominantly had offensive backgrounds. The pipeline for minorities on that side of the ball is lacking, as Steelers owner Art Rooney II reiterated Monday.

"We recognize we have seen progress on some fronts," said Rooney, chairman of the league's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee, "but we still have a way to go on other fronts."

The NFL saw an increase in the number of people of color in all coaching positions from 35% in the 2020 season to 39% last season. There was an all-time high increase in defensive coordinators to 15, up by two; an increase in minority GMs (five to seven), and assistant GMs (three to six).

Teams will receive league funding toward the coach's salary for up to two years.

Overall, including women in all Rooney Rule requirements is designed to address underrepresentation of women in key football positions. The league believes this will "encourage the further identification and development of women candidates and the ability to provide them additional opportunity to interview for open positions."

A total of 12 women coaches at the start of the 2021 season was an all-time high.

Dasha Smith, the NFL's chief administrative officer and one of the league's highest-ranking females, noted that for the first time, a woman was interviewed for a general manager's position this year.

Smith also said that virtual interviews will no longer be acceptable for head coach and general manager positions, and there will be specific requirements for candidates to become offensive assistants. Those would include at least three years of experience on the college or pro level.

There currently are five minority head coaches in the NFL. There are seven Black general managers.

The league also released a resolution to increase diversity ownership of franchises, and created a diversity advisory committee that includes Peter Harvey, a former attorney general of New Jersey; Rick Smith, a former general manager of the Houston Texans; and Don Thompson, former president and CEO of McDonald's Corporation.

Early Monday, Mike Tomlin said he did not hire Brian Flores as an assistant coach with the Pittsburgh Steelers out of sympathy for the former Miami Dolphins head coach.

Tomlin, who like Flores is African American, did so because Flores is "a good coach." That Flores had sued the NFL and three teams — the Dolphins, Giants and Broncos — claiming racist hiring practices, did not dissuade the long-time Steelers coach in any way, Tomlin said.

A member of the league's powerful competition committee and one of the most influential coaches in the sport, Tomlin spoke strongly about the lack of minority head coaches in the NFL. He, Houston's Lovie Smith, Miami's Mike McDaniel, who is biracial, the Jets' Robert Saleh and the Commanders' Ron Rivera are the five minority head coaches among the 32 teams. About 70% of the players are Black.

"I haven't been in any discussions and no, I don't have a level of confidence that would lead me to believe that things are going to be better," Tomlin said. "I'm more of a show me guy as opposed to a guy that sits around and talks about things.

"I think that we've pecked around the entire discussion and subject and we've done a lot of beneficial things," Tomlin added of adjustments to the Rooney Rule adopted in 2003 to enhance job opportunities for minorities. "But we've got to land the plane. We've got to hire capable candidates."

That, in Tomlin's estimation and actions, includes Flores, whose lawsuit has been a major topic this offseason. Flores was fired by the Dolphins despite helping turn around a floundering franchise in his three seasons as coach, going 19-14 the last two years.

Flores cites a string of text messages with Patriots coach Bill Belichick three days before his scheduled Giants interview for the head coaching position. Those texts led Flores to believe Brian Daboll already had been chosen as the new coach.

Belichick refused comment on the lawsuit and any role he might have had. Giants owner John Mara said Sunday he is not interested in any settlement with Flores and "I think the truth will come out. The allegations are false."

Also:— A former Super Bowl coach is returning to the league. The Indianapolis Colts hired John Fox as a senior defensive assistant. Fox led Carolina and Denver to conference championships before losing in Super Bowls.

"This was a role I really wanted to add," Colts coach Frank Reich said. Fox will work with new defensive coordinator Gus Bradley.

"A great complement to Gus," Reich said of Fox. "Our goal with John coming in, not for him to bring his system to us but for him to come in and learn our system and contribute some of his experience. How it can fit."— The NFL awarded the 2024 draft to Detroit on Monday. The city was a finalist for the 2022 event, which will be hosted next month in Las Vegas after the 2020 draft, originally planned for Las Vegas, was held virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dandan nips SCS in middle school boys caging, 17-15

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Dandan Middle School edged Saipan Community School, 17-15, in their duel in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2021-2022 last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Zach Ladore gave the Tottots a 16-15 lead in the closing minutes of the match against the Guardians before Allan Hofnejas made 1 of 2 free throws to make it a 2-point lead. SCS then had a chance to send the match into overtime but misfired in their last offensive sets on the north court of the MHS gym.

Alex Sangalang paced Dandan with 10 points, while Ladore added 4 markers in the win. SCS was led by the 10 points of Elijah Ye with brother David adding the other 5 points.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Dandan Middle School and Saipan Community School players battle for ball possession during their game in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2021-2022 last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

On the south court of the MHS Gym, Saipan International School defeated Tanapag Middle School, 20-9. After a tight first half that saw the Geckos only leading by 3 points, 11-8. SIS then turned on the jets and limited the Tatagas to a single free throw en route to the 11-point win.

Aiden Camacho was the top scorer for SIS with 9 points, followed by the 7 points of Jackie Xu.

In the IT&E Interscholastic Co-ed Elementary School Basketball League 2021-2022 last Saturday, Koblerville Elementary School defeated William S. Reyes Elementary School, 22-4; San Vicente Elementary School 2 beat Brilliant Star School, 16-3; Kagman Elementary School thrashed SVES 2, 26-6; and KobES 2 thumped SVES 2, 26-4.

Both the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2021-2022 and the IT&E Interscholastic Co-ed Elementary School Basketball League 2021-2022 seasons are being organized by the Public School System Athletic Program with help from the Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation.

UOG Triton Athletics, Field House to host basketball friendlies for NMI national teams

The University of Guam's Triton Athletics and Field House Department will be hosting six games for the Men's and Women's National Teams of the Northern Marianas Islands in the UOG Calvo Field House on Thursday-Saturday, March 31-April 2, 2022.

The NMI teams will face teams from the University of Guam, Andersen Air Force Base and a couple of club teams from Guam.

On Thursday, March 31, the Northern Marianas Islands women's team will play the Fuetsa women's basketball club at 6:30pm and then NMI men's team will face the MircoFriends club team at 8:15pm.

UOG Athletics director Doug Palmer said, "The Fuetsa basketball club has been committed to building women's basketball on Guam and have played women's basketball in the UOG leagues over the past several years and this was a great way to show our appreciation to them by giving Fuetsa an international game and the MicroFriends club opened their community tournaments to our university teams so we could play basketball when the UOG Calvo Field House was host for the vaccine program on Guam and we could not play basketball at our home court."

On Friday, April 1, the Bombers from Andersen Air Force Base will make an appearance as the Lady Bombers will face NMI women at 6:30pm and the KFC Bombers will take on the NMI men at 8:15pm.

Palmer added "Both Bomber teams have been some of the best basketball teams on the island for years, and besides our Guam National Teams, the Bombers are the best examples of basketball on Guam to give the Northern Marianas Islands the best competition possible."

And in the final match-up for Northern Marianas on Saturday, April 2, the Tritons and Lady Tritons from UOG will play their neighbors at 6:30pm and 8:15pm as well.

Palmer stated, "Our men's team is very young, but is talented and should give NMI a good game, our women's team is building from scratch, but the ladies are getting better every game we play, so hopefully they will give some good competition to the NMI women's team."

And finally, Palmer said of the overall experience "This was a great opportunity for some of the best and diverse basketball teams on the island of Guam to play the best team from the Northern Marianas Islands in some friendly competition here at the UOG Calvo Field House. NMI is warming up for some FIBA international competition in the next few months and we are glad to give our neighbors some games, competition and friendship".

Limited spectators (250 per game) will be allowed for $5 for adults and $3 for non-UOG students and seniors (60 and above). UOG students are free to attend but numbers are still limited by the 250 per game total.

All games will be streamed "Live" from the field house on the UOG Athletic Facebook page that can be found at: https://www.facebook.com/UOGTritonAthletics . Fred Peters, boys basketball coach at St. John's High School, will provide commentary and play by play for the games.

For more information, email Doug Palmer at palmerd@triton.uog.edu or call at (671)735-2862. ***(PR)***

CRUZ

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most anti-Allen Iverson of reasons—practice.

"There is no secret to winning a race—dedication, practice, and the love of the sport all contribute! I ride to have fun, winning is just a plus, and I am grateful to have gotten a win this past Sunday," he said.

Cruz started riding at age 15 years old in 2001 after gaining interest from watching the 3rd Annual Extreme Motorcross Championship 2000 event at the old Kan Pacific Motocross Track.

"My dad asked if I wanted to ride and I said, 'yes!' Started riding and fell in love with the sport. After MRA shut down in 2007/2008, I did trail rides over the years and got back into riding with the reopening of MRA in 2020 with three of my kids aged 15, 11, and 9."

He said race conditions on Sunday were as good as you could expect—sunny with a slight drizzle and dusty. "The track was a bit challenging especially on the sand sections, one wrong move you will lose the front end or have a slide out."

The March Expert Class champ dedicated his win to his children and the Ericco Racing Team.

"I want them to know that having fun is the goal, and with focus, practice, and a proper mindset, a win is not far. I would like to thank my wife for her patience and unending support. She's been there with me for 18 years and still supports me living my childhood dreams in motocross! Also, I want to thank my dad, Eric Cruz, my main sponsor of Ericco Racing Team, Guy Pudney of MarPac (Team Ultra), and Oma Fejeran of Marianas Native for their support and sponsorship throughout this 2022 race season."

In the Novice Class, Joseph Santos nipped Ethan Yumul for the checkered flag after both riders finished with 47 points. Santos, however, won the second heat to take the win. Bob Ferrer finished third with 38 points.

Bentley Koshiro won a two-horse race in the Peewee I Class after topping both heats for 50 points. Ryan Borja was the only rider in the division and collected 40 points.

In the Peewee II Class, Conan Iakopo was also perfect winning both heats for 50 points. Keenon Togawa finished second with 42 points, while Kaleb Reyes completed the Top 3 with 40 points.

Results of the Peewee ATV, Mini II, Big Boy ATV, Veterans, and Intermediate classes will be published in tomorrow's issue of *Saipan Tribune.*

KNIGHTS

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13, then SSHS 2 won the second set 21-8. In the final set, SIS 1 secured the win with a nail-biter result, 17-15.

SIS 1 coach Stacy Eno said that, "because of COVID-19, other sports, and injuries, it was hard to get the boys together as a full team, and we're really spotty up until last week." However, she was "very happy with how far we improved… and these kids are fresh. They just learned this rotation. They're taking it in stride, and I'm very proud of them," she added.

The other games in the MHS Gym were between MHS 1 and SIS 1, with MHS 1 prevailing after two sets, with the first set score of 21-8 and with the final set score of 21-18.

SSHS 2 and Kagman High School played as well, where KHS defeated SSHS 2 after two sets, with the first set score of 21-14 and with the final set score of 22-20.

MCS 2 and Grace Christian Academy also played two sets, with the victory handed over to GCA after winning two consecutive sets. The first set score was 21-15 and the final score was a blowout at 21-4.

Between MHS 2 and MHS 3, MHS 2 was handed the victory after winning both sets, with the first set score of 21-16 and with the final set score of 21-19.

The Public School System Boys High School Volleyball League 2021-2022 is being held with help from the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association.

TEST

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FIBA Micro Cup is a qualifier for the 2023 Pacific Games, which will take place in the Solomon Islands.

"With the Micro Cup fast approaching, we hope to see how far we have come since we joined the national program and what we need to work on more to have the opportunity and honor to represent our islands," said Santos.

Veteran coach Joe Diaz echoed Santos' thoughts, saying that the Guam event will give him the opportunity to evaluate each player and see how their individual and team skills have improved since they began committing to the program.

"This is also our opportunity to execute what we've been doing in our practices. Every player on the pool has great skills whether on defense or offense, but it's a matter of putting them together and making the adjustments depending on the game situation. These friendlies will give us the on-game experience that most of our players have been lacking since our local leagues and off-island events were shelved in the last two years due the COVID-19 pandemic. This is the process that we all must go through to rebuild our basketball program," Diaz said.

Diaz added that the NMI Friendship Classic is also a good way to touch base with Guam teams and establish partnership with them.

The NMI men's pool will challenge MicroFriends club team today at 8:15pm and then duel the KFC Bombers tomorrow. The visiting team will close out the friendlies with an 8:15 match against the Tritons this Saturday.

From the men's pool, only 12 will make it to the NMI's final roster for the FIBA Micronesian Cup and NMIBF president James Lee said that off-island players are also part of the pool and can be considered on the selection provided they meet the program's criteria.

"All off-island athletes that want to try out must first email the federation about their interest and must meet the criteria prior to be allowed to walk in. The other requirements are for players to at least be participating in a basketball league within the year, submit most recent stats, and meet physical and skill tests. Lastly, if approved to be an off island 'walk in' to tryout, he or she must be on Saipan first week of May and practice with the rest of the national program athletes. The head coach will then determine if he or she fits into the overall team and be selected as the Top 12 to represent the NMI to the FIBA Micronesian Cup," Lee said. ***(PR)***

Antetokounmpo's 40 points, late block lead Bucks past 76ers

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Sports

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Cruz tops Expert Class on borrowed bike

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

With his trusted steed sidelined, Ellery Cruz phoned a good friend and borrowed his bike. Little did he now that the spanking new 2022 Yamaha YZ 250F would lead him to victory in the Expert Class of the 2022 Monster Energy Point Series Race last Sunday at the Cowtown Race Track.

LAO ZHANG
Ellery Cruz, seen here in a file photo, topped the Expert Class of the 2022 Monster Energy Point Series Race last Sunday at the Cowtown Race Track.

The 35-year-old topped the division after going perfect on both heats to finish with 50 points. He was followed by Dave Celis with his 42 points, while Patrick Togawa completed the Top 3 with 38 points.

Cruz jokingly said borrowing the new bike probably was the reason he won the March edition of the Marianas Racing Association race.

"Unfortunately, my 2020 Yamaha YZ450F was down from practice before the race so I had to phone a friend and my good friend, Jared Lizama, did not hesitate to loan me his 2022 Yamaha YZ 250F. Maybe that's the secret to winning," he said in jest.

On a serious note, the Homeland Security logistics staff attributed the win to the

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Knights 1 turns back Dolphins 2 in return of boys HS v-ball

LEIGH GASES
Mount Carmel School 1's Merrick Toves goes up for a spike against Marianas High School 2 during their Public School System Boys High School Volleyball League 2021-2022 match Tuesday night at the MHS Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

Mount Carmel School Knights 1 defeated Marianas High School Dolphins 2 in three sets as the Public School System Boys High School Volleyball League 2021-2022 season kicked off Tuesday night at the near capacity, humid, and unairconditioned MHS Gymnasium.

The first set was won by the MHS boys' team after MCS started the game aggressively and in a rush and were unable to keep up with their opponents. MHS won the first set by 2 points, 20-22.

However, with a lot of movement from the Knights who didn't really rely on spikes and force in the end, they prevailed over the Dolphins. In the second set, the Knights won 21-9. The last and third set, the Knights finalized their win, 15-7. The Dolphins were unable to catch up despite their first set lead.

Knights 2 coach Francis San Nicolas said after the game that it's "good to be back" after last season. Despite the shaky start, the Knights managed to catch up on the last two sets after listening to their coach, "to keep up and keep our cool." San Nicolas added that he is happy with the start of their season.

The team is made up of JunBeom Kim, Christopher Mafnas, Merrick Toves, Brandon Lee, Earle San Nicolas, Richard Steele, Richard Villagomez, Ji Hwan Ryu, Jeremiah Diaz, Xin Wen Jin, Achilles Evangelista, Lindon Digno, Dylan Santos, Vaughn Mallari, and Min Soo Kwon.

In the other game between Saipan Southern High School and Saipan International School, the smaller and younger SIS 1 team, who only had two seniors, prevailed over a taller SSHS team.

SIS 1 lead the first set 21-

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Test and evaluation time for men's hoops pool

Players under the Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation's NMI Senior National Program left Saipan this morning to play in the NMI Friendship Classic at the UOG Calvo Field House in Guam.

The men's pool joins the women's in the Guam trip for a series of friendly games against the UOG Tritons and a couple of club teams beginning this Thursday until Saturday. The men's group has Donovan Brennan, Eli Aughenbaugh, Chioni Dela Cruz, Greg Sablan, Leo Naraja, Shane Deleon Guerrero, Khristian Carl Itaas, Lucio Aldan, Ervin Villarin, Nyrel Eugenio, Carson Sumol, Frankie Satur, Jeff Castro, Sir Lashu Dela Cruz, and captain Coby Santos on its roster for the three-day event.

Santos and company have been training under the national program since last year, as they battle for slots on the NMI National Team and hope to play in the FIBA Micronesian Cup that Guam will also be hosting from June 8 to 11 this year. The

See TEST on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Players under the Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation's NMI Senior National Program join coach Joe Diaz, center front row, for a team photo at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. The pool is now in Guam to play in the NMI Friendship Classic at the UOG Calvo Field House